

Saimaa University of Applied Sciences
Business Administration, Lappeenranta
Master's Degree Program in International Business
International Business Administration

Said Awena Omar

**Intercultural Communication in Field Campaigns
and Capacity Building Forest Projects in Nepal
Case: Arbonaut Ltd.**

Master's Thesis 2013

Abstract

Said Awena Omar

Intercultural communication in field campaigns and capacity building forest projects in Nepal, 62 pages, 2 appendices

Saimaa University of Applied Sciences, Lappeenranta

Degree Programme in International Business

Master Thesis 2013

Instructors: Manager of Language Center [Ritva Kosonen], Saimaa University of Applied Sciences

Managing Director [Tuomo Kauranne], Arbonaut Ltd.

Intercultural conflicts usually happen in organizations, particularly in international organizations, when people or teams from different cultural backgrounds are working together. The topic of this research was intercultural communication in field campaigns and capacity building forest projects in Nepal. It was intended to find out the sources of intercultural conflicts between an international team and a Nepalese team as well as between the international team and local Terai people during the LiDAR field campaign in Nepal. The possible ways, which will alleviate the conflicts, were also recommended.

The study consists of theory and empirical data. The cultural information of Finland and Nepal were theoretically collected through literature. The empirical data of Arbonaut Ltd's culture was collected through a questionnaire whereas data of the intercultural conflicts, the main theme of this research, was collected through interview. The GLOBE nine cultural dimensions were used as a theory to collect data.

Based on the findings, intercultural conflicts happened in different cultural environments. Differences in time management, nepotism, lack of involvement of team members in decision making, interference of planned project decisions, less respect of status, less sharing of information and issues of authority were the sources of conflicts. The results will be useful to Arbonaut Ltd., particularly to the international team to know cultural differences between them and the Nepalese team and the sources of intercultural conflicts faced them during the project. This will help to reduce conflicts in next similar field campaigns. Also it will be helpful to other organizations that operate in similar environments.

Keywords: culture, conflict and intercultural communication, Nepal

Table of Contents

1	Introduction.....	1
1.1	Research problem	2
1.2	Purpose of the study	2
1.3	Research methods	3
1.4	Structure of the study	4
1.5	Nepal: Terai and its people.....	4
2	Cultural dimensions of the GLOBE research.....	6
2.1	GLOBE cultural dimensions	7
2.1.1	Uncertainty avoidance	7
2.1.2	Power distance	8
2.1.3	Gender egalitarianism.....	8
2.1.4	Humane orientation	9
2.1.5	Future orientation.....	9
2.1.6	Performance orientation.....	10
2.1.7	In-group collectivism	10
2.1.8	Institutional collectivism	11
2.1.9	Assertiveness	11
2.2	Finnish culture and its impact on Arbonaut Ltd.	13
2.2.1	Finnish social culture	13
2.2.2	Finnish organizational culture	14
2.3	Nepalese culture	16
2.3.1	Nepalese social culture.....	16
2.3.2	Nepalese organizational culture.....	18
3	Empirical research	20
3.1	Data analysis of the Arbonaut Ltd's. culture	20
3.1.1	Uncertainty avoidance	21
3.1.2	Power distance	22
3.1.3	Gender egalitarianism.....	23
3.1.4	Humane orientation	24
3.1.5	Future orientation.....	26
3.1.6	Performance orientation.....	27
3.1.7	In-group collectivism	28
3.1.8	Institutional collectivism	29
3.1.9	Assertiveness	30
3.2	Data analysis on intercultural conflicts in Terai Arc Landscape, Nepal ...	31
3.2.1	Uncertainty avoidance	34
3.2.2	Power distance	35
3.2.3	Gender egalitarianism.....	38
3.2.4	Humane orientation	39
3.2.5	Future orientation.....	40
3.2.6	Performance orientation.....	42
3.2.7	In-group collectivism	43
3.2.8	Institutional collectivism	45
3.2.9	Assertiveness	46
4.	Conclusion.....	47
4.1	Results	48
4.2	Limitations of the study.....	51
4.3	Recommendations	52

Figures	55
Charts.....	55
Tables.....	55
References	56

Appendices

Appendix1	Questionnaire of Arbonaut's culture
Appendix 2	Interview questions of intercultural conflicts

1 Introduction

Researchers argue that cultural differences easily enhance stereotyping and the confrontation of 'us versus them' (Vaara et al. 2012, p. 5). A globalization process creates several opportunities to companies to establish businesses outside their homeland but again, this creates more challenges due to cultural differences. Organizations that are moving to unfamiliar cultural environments are often badly surprised by unexpected reactions of the public or the authorities to what they do or want to do (Hofstede 1984 p. 270).

Arbonaut Ltd, is a Finnish technological forest company that was established in 1994. The company, headquartered in Joensuu, has its other offices, for instance in Helsinki, Finland and in the USA (Arbonaut webpage 2009). Around eighty employees work for Arbonaut. The company conducts measurement campaigns in forests all over the world. It provided a forest technological assistance in the 'LiDAR field campaign in Nepal', a project which was a joint effort between the Forest Resource Assessment (FRA) Nepal project, Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF US) and Arbonaut Ltd. (Kauranne 2013).

The project took two months. Fifty four people were involved in the project, nine of them were women. Eight women out of fifty people and one woman out of four people were from the Nepalese and international team respectively. During the project, intercultural-related clashes happened between an international team and a Nepalese team, and several complaints arose. The problem did not only involve the international team versus the Nepalese team, but misunderstandings also happened between the international team and local people. The Nepalese side accused the international team members for having less respect for local cultures, less respect for status and their expertise. Gender and marriage-related issues, which are partly related to religion, have been also complained about. On the other hand, the international team was complaining about lack of proper working ethics by their counterparts. At the same time, issues of authority frequently arose.

The research aims to investigate the sources of this practical problem that happened during the LiDAR field campaign which took place in Terai Arc Landscape (TAL) region in Nepal. The data is collected by using interviews. In the end, this thesis explores the sources which influenced the intercultural conflicts between the international team and the Nepalese team as well as between the international team and local people. Additionally, the research suggests the ways which will help to alleviate intercultural conflicts in future similar field campaigns.

1.1 Research problem

The thesis studies the intercultural problems faced by the Arbonaut's international team versus the Nepalese team and between the international team and local Terai people. The international team is a team that was organized by Arbonaut Ltd. It was composed by the Arbonaut personnel from Finland and by other forest experts from different companies and different countries, such as Denmark and Nepal. The counterpart of the international team is the Nepalese team, which is the host team from Nepal composed by the Nepalese. In their way of collecting LiDAR plots in TAL area, conflicts rose. According to Robbins (1978) conflict is any kind of opposition or antagonistic interactions between two or more parties (Singleton et al. 2011, p. 149). From this definition, it can be said that, conflict is a situation of misunderstanding between two or more parties. Because of the complaints from both teams, it has been decided to find the sources and the solutions of these intercultural conflicts.

The following is the research problem presented in two questions:

1. What are the sources of intercultural conflicts in the LiDAR field campaign in Nepal?
2. What are the possible ways of alleviating intercultural conflicts in the future field campaigns?

1.2 Purpose of the study

Every society has its culture. Schein (1992) defined culture as "a set of basic and shared practices and values that help human communities find solutions to

problems of external adaptation – how to survive - and internal integration – how to stay together” (Javidan 2004, p. 243). Hofstede explained that “culture consists of the unwritten rules of the social game. It is the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of the people from others” (2010, p. 6). In this situation it is quite difficult for the society’s culture to change or to be interfered by another culture. Although these cultures may converge on some aspects when they come together, their idiosyncrasies will likely amplify and may become a source of cultural conflicts (House 2004, p. 1).

The purpose of the study was:

1. To find out the sources of intercultural conflicts that happened during the LiDAR field campaign in Nepal.
2. To suggest the ways of alleviating intercultural conflicts in similar future field campaigns.

This research will be helpful to the Arbonaut Ltd, because it secures a peaceful future working environment to the international team and Nepalese team whenever working in Nepal or in similar environment. Also it will help other organizations that work in similar environment.

1.3 Research methods

Because of the purpose and nature of the study, the thesis comprises both theory and empirical data. In the empirical data quantitative and qualitative approaches are exploited. The quantitative data was conducted through a questionnaire whereby Arbonaut Ltd. culture is studied and analyzed. The questionnaire was sent to Arbonaut Ltd. through email. This was the best method to collect Arbonaut’s cultural data since all personnel had been sent the questionnaire at the same time rather than using other methods like interviews, which would take longer time. The questionnaire was formulated in closed statements form. However, it provides chances to the respondents to provide their comments after each question.

The qualitative data of the intercultural conflicts was collected by using interviews and they were thoroughly analyzed. Five members from both teams who participated in the LiDAR field campaign were interviewed. Interview questions were structured in an open form to provide wide chances to the interviewees to explain the sources of the problem and to express their views and feelings about the conflicts.

The social and organizational cultural data of Finland and Nepal are theoretically reviewed by using literature and other acceptable sources such as internet materials and research papers. This study finds and analyzes data by using GLOBE theory.

1.4 Structure of the study

In chapter 1, the introductory section is presented, this bring in the research problem and background of the study. Research questions, purpose of the study and research methods are also presented. Structure of the study and Nepal including Terai and its people, are also given in the introductory stage.

Chapter 2 deals with the theoretical part that comprises GLOBE cultural dimensions as the theory to be used to collect and analyze data. Then Finnish culture; its social and organizational culture is studied. Next is the Nepalese culture in which social and organizational culture is presented.

Chapter 3 contains findings whereby empirical data is analyzed. Beginning with the Arbonaut's culture, the chapter ends with the analysis of intercultural conflicts data.

The final chapter contains conclusions. Results, limitations and recommendations of the study are presented in this chapter.

1.5 Nepal: Terai and its people

Nepal is a land locked country situated in Southern Asia between India on the western and China on the eastern side. Its total area is 147,181 square kilometers (The World Factbook 2012). Kathmandu is the capital city of Nepal, a country of 29.3 million people who are ethnically diverse (U.S Department of State

2012). As a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multilingual nation, various languages are spoken in Nepal including Nepali which is spoken by 47.8% and used as an official language. Others are Maithili and Bhojpuri spoken by 12.1% and 7.4% respectively (Feller 2009, p. 11). Although other religions such as Buddhism and Muslim exist, Nepal is a well-known Hindu country with the estimation of 80.6% belonging to this religion according to the 2001 census (Thapa 2010, p. 921).

According to Jolly (Dec. 2009), from 1996 to 2006, Nepal was in an armed conflict. The conflict pitted government forces against Maoist fighters. The war was launched by the communist party of Nepal (Maoist) with the intention of overthrowing the Nepalese monarchy. Since the end of the civil war the Terai region has experienced a surge in violence, including several strikes. (Wann 2007).

Terai is an area in southern Nepal. It shares a border with India, the borderline is of about 40 km and lies about 300m high above the sea level. 20% of Nepal's total land area is covered by Terai, a part of the Ganges Basin and the main rice growing region. Its temperature rises up to 40 degrees Celsius in May and June and it is very cold in January.

According to Feller people of Terai make 50% of the Nepal's total population. Dominant ethnic groups are the Maithili in the East, Bhojpuri in the central, and Abadhi in the West of Terai (2009, pp. 13 - 17). Much of the population is physically and culturally similar to the Indo-Aryan people of northern India (U.S Department of State 2012).

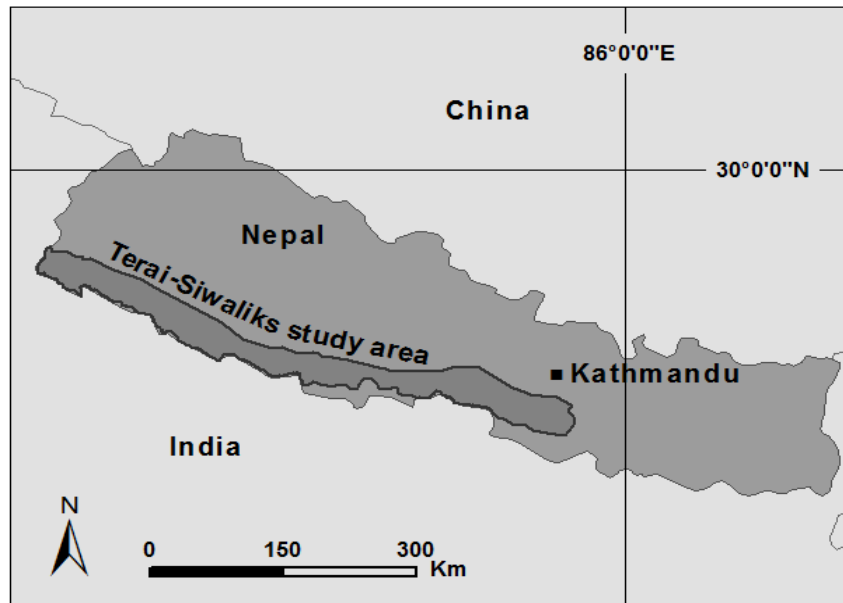


Figure 1. A map of Nepal (Kandel 2013).

2 Cultural dimensions of the GLOBE research

This chapter will explain the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) cultural dimensions, a theory to be used in the study. Social and organizational culture of Finland and Nepal will be also theoretically analyzed.

Differences in perception, cognition, reasoning and communication styles can lead to misperceptions and miscommunications that hamper the meeting people and create conflicts (Kimmel 2006 p. 644). This situation may face not only a company as a whole but also even a team that conducts business or provides services in a foreign country or together with a foreign team.

As the GLOBE cultural study investigated the relationship between societal culture, organizational culture, and leadership practices in particular countries and business competitiveness, the theory is used to find the sources of the intercultural conflicts by studying and finding cultural knowledge of both sides of the contradictory teams. In that way using this theory, cultures of Finland and Nepal will be studied to understand their differences, which will provide guidelines “to develop and build relationships” between the teams, which will enable to find

out the sources of the intercultural conflicts and “create unique solutions” (Kimmel 2006, p. 645). Also the Arbonaut’s culture will be studied by reflecting the GLOBE theory in order to understand the culture of the company. This will help to analyze the sources of the conflicts.

Societies in the world are differed in their way of living (socially) and how they perform their responsibilities in organizations by distinctive elements that are known as ‘cultural dimensions’. The nine cultural dimensions as categorized by the GLOBE study are uncertainty avoidance, power distance, gender egalitarianism, humane orientation, future orientation, performance orientation, in-group collectivism, institutional collectivism and assertiveness (House 2004, p. 11).

2.1 GLOBE cultural dimensions

The GLOBE cultural dimensions are used to find the sources of conflicts between the international team and the Nepalese team as well as between the international team and local people during the LiDAR field campaign in Nepal. The nine GLOBE cultural dimensions are as follows.

2.1.1 Uncertainty avoidance

This concept can be defined as the extent to which members of an organization or society strive to avoid uncertainty by relying on established social norms, rituals and bureaucratic practices. People in high uncertainty avoidance cultures actively seek to decrease the probability of unpredictable future events that could adversely affect the operation of an organization or society and remedy the success of such adverse effects (House 2004 pp. 11 - 12). This is the situation of avoiding doing things that are unclear and unstructured. This dimension enhances good organization of tasks and assigning roles, and to be consistent in performing activities or implementing of assigned roles in the society and organization level.

In the societies that correspond closely with high uncertainty avoidance, systematical structure, organization and performance of activities orderly is appreciated, while in the lower uncertainty avoidance societies, characterized with

unclear structure of plans, less organization, and inconsistency in performing their activities. Naturally, higher uncertainty societies differ with the lower ones by highly considering time and strictly following timetables.

2.1.2 Power distance

Power distance refers to the degree to which members of an organization or societies expect and agree that power should be stratified and concentrated at high level of an organization or government (House 2004 p. 12). It reflects the extent to which a society agrees and supports authority, power differences and status privileges. It also indicates the hierarchy of the authority in the society and organization. This kind of culture exists in every society but they differ in its level of practice.

Societies that have very hierarchical organizations and hence create big differences between lower and upper people represent high power distance and societies who prefer flat structures with the fewest layers are low power distance cultures (Bartlett & Davidsson 2003, p. 26).

Societies that have high power distance provide little room for the people to involve in discussion and decision making, members in the societies or organizations find it very difficult to express their views on the top levels or with authority. On the other hand, societies that practice low power distance involve people in discussion and decision making and members are free to express their views to the authority (Carl et al 2004). Moreover, in low power distance information is less shared, in most cases the underprivileged people are deprived of the opportunity of getting information. In contrast to this, in the high power distance information is widely shared in the society or organization.

2.1.3 Gender egalitarianism

Gender egalitarianism is defined as the degree to which an organization or society minimizes gender role differences while promoting gender equality (House 2004 p. 12). This is the way society concerns itself with distributing roles among men and women, people having equal participations, representation in politics,

government and taking roles in organizations. The more gender egalitarianism there is in society, the less it relies on biological aspects to assign social and organizational responsibilities. In short, societies are not equal in practice, some are lower while others are higher in gender egalitarianism.

Unlike in low gender egalitarianism societies, high gender egalitarianism societies women are accorded in higher status, at the same time less occupational sex segregation in their organizations is practiced (Emrich et al. 2004, p. 359).

2.1.4 Humane orientation

Humane orientation is the degree to which individuals in the organizations or societies encourage and reward individuals for being fair, altruistic, friendly generous, caring, and kind to others (House 2004, p. 12). This dimension shows the way people treat one another and in the social programs this is institutionalized within each society.

How people consider each other depends on culture. The society that has high humane orientation considers others like family, and friends are important, in contrast to this, in low humane orientation societies, self interest is most important in life (Kabasakal & Bodur 2004, p. 570).

2.1.5 Future orientation

The degree to which individuals in organizations or societies engage in future-oriented behaviors such as planning, investing in the future, and delaying individual or collective gratification is defined as future orientation (House 2004, p. 12). Organizations or societies consider planning for future, investing and assessing their processes for detecting effects of the current actions in order to bring a good future situation. Researchers also explain that this dimension is about dealing with society's search for virtue (Hofstede et al. 2010, p. 247). Not all societies consider planning for their future on an equal level, some societies take more consideration while others less.

Keough et al. (1999) stated that, societies that practice high future orientation tend to have a strong capability and willingness to imagine future contingencies, formulate future goal, and seek to achieve goals and develop strategies to meet their future aspiration. On the other hand, societies that have low future orientation culture may show incapacity or unwillingness to plan a sequence to realize their desired goals, and may not appreciate the warning signals that their current behavior negatively influences the realization of their goals in the future (Ashkanasy et al. 2004, p. 285).

Moreover, in low future orientation society people have a propensity to spend now rather than to save for the future. This kind of culture is opposite to that of high future orientation society, which has a desire to save for the future (Ashkanasy et al. 2004, p. 302).

2.1.6 Performance orientation

Performance orientation refers to the degree to which an organization or society encourages and rewards group members for performance improvement and excellence (House 2004 p. 13). It means how much societies and organizations put effort of enhancing societies' improvement, innovation, and performing responsibilities. Like any other dimension, performance orientation is practiced in different level in different societies.

Society that practice high performance orientation puts more emphasis on results rather than people, which is contrary to low performance orientation society, which emphasizes loyalty and belongingness. Again, unlike in high performance orientation society where people value training and development, in low performance orientation society, people value societal and family relationships. (Javidan 2004. P. 245)

2.1.7 In-group collectivism

This is the degree to which individuals express pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in their organizations or families (House 2004, p. 12). Unlike high in-group collectivism that cherishes relationships of members within the group low in-group

collectivism cherishes individuals' experience and meaningfulness in the work area. Most cases societies that score high on in-group collectivism are more likely to perform their activities in groups which are vice versa with the low in-group collectivism societies.

In addition to that, societies of high in-group collectivism practice different kinds of discrimination, such as ethnic, religious, and racial discrimination. This means that in these societies greater distinctions between in-groups and out-groups are experienced in societal and organizational levels. (Gelfand et al. 2004, p. 454).

2.1.8 Institutional collectivism

This concept is defined as the degree to which organizational and societal institutional practices encourage and reward collective distribution of resources and collective action (House 2004, p. 12). It manifests the situation of an organization or society to provide needs to their members such as tools for performing activities and accomplishing their roles. It also influences the situation of working in teams and encouraging members for team success. Emphasis is also shown on dissemination of information in all levels in society as well as in organizations. Research indicates that, the way societies encourage and reward their people varies by culture.

According to Gelfand in high institutional collectivism societies, people become highly interdependent with the organization since resources are provided and information is widely shared. On the other hand, in low institutional collectivism society, people assume that they are largely independent on the organization (2004, p. 459).

2.1.9 Assertiveness

This concept refers as the degree to which individuals in organizations or societies are assertive, confrontational, and aggressive in social relationships (House 2004, p. 12). Assertiveness is a behavior intended to assert oneself or stand up

for one's own personal rights. What the organizations and societies do is to manage the environment. Societies differ in managing their environment.

Higher assertive society tends to value assertive, dominant, and tough behavior while low assertive societies view assertiveness as socially unacceptable and value modesty and tenderness. Again, in high assertive cultures people value direct and unambiguous communication, while societies that score lower in assertiveness like to speak indirectly and emphasize face-saving. Also unlike high assertive cultures that valuing competition, societies with low assertive culture tend to value cooperation with the institutions (such as family, schools, and church), and organizations or teams in their relationships. (Hartog 2004, p. 405).

The table below summarizes all nine cultural dimensions that have been explained above.

Dimensions	Society that scores high	Society that scores low
Uncertainty avoidance	Clear structure, well organized and perform their activities systematically Time is well considered	Unclear structure, less organized, and inconsistency in performing their activities Less time related
Power distance	Big differences between lower and upper people Little involvement in discussions and decision making Information is localized	Small differences between lower and upper people People are involved in discussions and decision making Information is shared
Gender egalitarianism	Women are accorded in higher status in society Less occupational sex segregation	Women are accorded in lower status in society More occupational sex segregation
Human orientation	Family, friends, and strangers are important	Self interest is important
Future orientation	Have longer strategic orientation Value the deferment of gratification, placing a higher priority on longer-term success	Have shorter strategic orientation Value instant gratification and place higher priorities on immediate rewards
Performance orientation	Emphasize results more than people	Emphasize loyalty and belongingness

	Value training and development	Value societal and family relationships
In-group collectivism	More likely perform their activities in groups Emphasize relatedness Higher level of discrimination, i.e. ethnic, religious, and racial	Individuals perform their activities alone Emphasize rationality Low level of discrimination
Institutional collectivism	High interdependence on the organization Resources and information is widely shared	People are largely independent on the organization Less sharing of information and resources
Assertiveness	Value assertive, dominant, and tough behavior Direct and unambiguous communication is valued Value competition	Value modesty and tenderness Indirect communication, emphasis on face-saving Value cooperation

Table 1. Summary of the nine GLOBE cultural dimensions

2.2 Finnish culture and its impact on Arbonaut Ltd.

This section will theoretically analyze the Finnish societal and organizational culture.

2.2.1 Finnish social culture

“For hundreds of years the Finns were subjected to foreign domination, yet neither once-mighty Sweden nor monolithic Russia was able to eliminate Finnish customs, language or culture and historical references from both great powers constantly mention Finnish bravery, reliability and diligence” (Lewis 1996, p. 190).

In reflection to this quotation it can be said that Finns are culturally conservative.

According to Lindell and Sigfrids (2007), Finnish people are living in an individual way but they are cooperative and less biased. They are treated equally in the society regardless of their gender, equality between men and women is relatively high. Again, title is not so much regarded in the Finnish culture. Achievement is more considered not only in the organizations but also in the

societal level. This indicates that the Finns are less gender biased and at the same time they are low in power distance.

Moreover, Lewis described that the Finns are non-talkative, they say what is important to them. They like to speak openly and plainly. For them, “silence is not equated with failure to communicate, but is an integral part of social interaction” (1996, p. 196). Also, the Finns way of life is calm and hard working. They engage full in accomplishing their responsibilities. At the same time, Lewis explained that the Finns are punctual and to them time is money. Time is well considered in accomplishing their schedules; “transportations are arranged, buses, trains, and aeroplanes leave on time, there are no hurricanes” in Finland (1996, p.200). All of these indicate how the Finns perform their responsibilities, how they are low in in-group collectivism, and high in risk avoidance.

2.2.2 Finnish organizational culture

Like other countries Finland has its organizational culture that was (is) molded by their societal culture.

The GLOBE cultural findings conclude that, North Europe reported the highest level of gender egalitarianism (Emrich et al. 1994, p. 388). In Finnish organizations, gender differences are not much taken into consideration. In business, for instance, many women can be found in most senior positions in large Finnish companies. However, according to the GLOBE findings Finland’s average score is at the middle level in gender egalitarianism.

In Finnish organizations, the gap between managers and subordinates is minimized, all people are considered equal. Employees have the right to influence decisions affecting them, their work and working condition (Lindell & Sigfrids 2007, p. 86). Subordinates are involved in decision making and the critical decisions are done in group discussions for the sake of the organization. In power distance, Finland is at the middle level according to the GLOBE results.

According to the GLOBE cultural investigation, the Nordic countries show to have strong future orientation (Gupta & Hanges 2004, p. 199). In organizations, the Finns like to plan, organize and accomplish their strategies for future success. Managers also plan for long term views and seek to achieve goals. This shows how high future orientation is in Finland.

The Finns take an effort in advancing society, improving innovations and performing their responsibilities well. Managers are task-oriented and emphasize achievement of the goal, productivity and profit. However, considering the GLOBE cultural findings, performance orientation is relatively low in Finland.

Finns are neither assertive nor aggressive in their relationship. As Smiley (1999) stated, Nordic people tend to be modest, punctual, honest, and high minded. Rich people generally dress, eat, and travel in the same style as the prosperous middle class, which reflects underplaying of assertive, familial, and masculine authority. The emphasis is on certainty, social unity, and cooperation (Gupta & Hanges 2004, p. 199). People value harmony rather than control over the environment. In the GLOBE point of view Finland scores at a middle level on assertiveness.

The Finns do not like diversion and interruption in their speech, one person speaks at a time in their meetings. Moreover, in the Finnish organization the team leader's task is just to outline the goals and team roles, it is then the individuals' role to accomplish the tasks. Finns do not like being closely supervised; they prefer to come to you with the end results (Lewis 1996, p. 200). This shows that Finns are low in in-group collectivism as is shown in the GLOBE cultural investigation.

In Finland people take more effort to avoid risks by relying on established social norms, rituals and bureaucratic practices. Managers are up to date and influence modern management ideas. Lindell and Sigfrids (2007) explained that, Finns are time-conscious and therefore punctuality and keeping appointments is important. The Finns are shown to have strong uncertainty avoidance in the organization as the GLOBE study shows.

Finns are very cooperative and emphasized team work in the organizations. Information is shared at all levels and resources are well distributed among the personnel. Organized and coordinated activities are appreciated. Finland scored highly in institutional collectivism due to the GLOBE findings.

The Finns are relatively low in humane orientation. Rules and regulations are used in solving organizational matters in Finland. Their organizational system takes place in a rational way (human resource management) rather than considering employees from a humane point of view, such as friendship, and family relation. In Finnish society, employees are honest, reliable and generally loyal and their perseverance “sisu” qualities are well documented (Lewis 1996, p. 199).

2.3 Nepalese culture

This section will describe societal and organizational culture of Nepal.

2.3.1 Nepalese social culture

Since the Globe investigation did not conduct cultural study in Nepal, the data of Nepalese culture will be reflected from the ‘regional and climate GLOBE clusters division’ of the GLOBE study. Nepal has been placed in the Southern Asia group, which includes countries like India, Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia and Iran (Gupta & Hanges 2004, p. 191). It has been decided to place Nepal in the Southern Asia group category not only because of its geographical position but also its peoples’ origin.

Regarding to the GLOBE investigation, the countries of eastern regions score stronger in humane orientation and in group collectivism and less in gender egalitarianism. At the same time, they scored higher in power distance but significantly lower in uncertainty avoidance and future orientation. (Gupta & Hanges 2004, p. 200).

In Nepal punctuality is not regarded as a virtue, transportation, and daily activities are not well organized and performed in time. People live in a relaxed way,

time is neither money nor an issue, it may be difficult or counterproductive to enforce strict deadlines (Feller 2009, p. 155). The Nepalese culture shows less risk avoidance and less engaged in performing their responsibilities.

In Nepal future life is not so much planned since in the systems there is not much emphasis on preparation for future development. Since the end of the civil war and establishment of multi-party democracy there have been not only constant changes that happen in government but also corruption remain rampant in society (Panday & Williams 2011, p. 67). This indicates not only less consideration for better future life but also lower performance orientation.

Interdependence is a way of life in Nepal, extended families are very common. They live together with good relationships, discuss about their social lives and share what they have. However, Nepalese culture is based on discrimination. According to Jamil, Nepalese culture discriminates between people on the basis of family kinship, caste, and social relation (2009, p. 197). This is an indication of high in-group collectivism and low consideration for risk avoidance.

Nepal women's position is at a lower level, many social activities are handled by them. In most cases household tasks are handled by women, such as collection of water, firewood, and fodder for animals (Feller 2009, p. 96). This shows how low gender egalitarianism is practiced.

Environmental conservation in Nepal is less appreciated; rubbish is just thrown in the street. People burn their rubbish regularly on the street, littering is a problem (Feller 2009, p. 96). This indicates that Nepalese society is low in future orientation.

Handshake is accepted, although offering your hand to women first is not very common in Nepal. Unlike in western cultures, in Nepal kissing publically is considered rude.

2.3.2 Nepalese organizational culture

A top down approach is the organizational management system in Nepal. There is a wider gap between managers and subordinates. Participation and freedom to make decisions at the lower levels are less provided, making the top leader to make decisions all the time. According to the GLOBE findings Southern Asia countries score at the middle level in power distance.

The Nepalese organizational culture seems to be more process than goal oriented.

“Culture of motivating employees is less practiced in Nepal, almost only salary paying is used as motivation and neglects other non-monetary incentives like trust, empowerment, and involvement of employees in decision making. Thus performance is regarded as a matter of low priority in Nepal. Nepalese are far back on managing performances in the organization.” (Jamil 2009, p. 208).

By considering the GLOBE cultural findings Southern Asia is at medium level in performance orientation.

In Nepalese organizations, people are more or less irrational in their planning. Superstition is something believed not only in social lives but also even in business or organizations processes. As Feller said, you may find a reliance on superstition rather than rational planning: astrology may be used to determine ‘auspicious days’ for meetings or the conclusion of a contract (2009 p. 147). Uncertainty avoidance in Southern Asia societies such as Nepal is at the middle level according to GLOBE results.

The Nepalese organizational system favors privileged people. Performance appraisals, rewards and punishment, recognitions, and benefits are highly dependent on bribery and family relation, these indicate that professional rules and codes of conduct with regard to an employee’s career and achievements are based on narrow group interests and personal connections (Jamil 2009, p. 204). This situation not only shows how high humane orientation is practiced but also low performance orientation. Regarding the GLOBE cultural investigation Southern Asia societies score high in humane orientation.

The Nepalese people are neither assertive nor aggressive in managing their environment. Direct criticism and contradiction has a negative view in their society. They normally do not like to criticize, contradict, or disagree with a person directly, because they avoid losing face (Feller 2009 p. 49). According to the GLOBE cultural study the Southern Asia region has medium score in assertiveness.

Nepal is a biased country that favors people in terms of gender, religion and caste. Based on Jamil's analysis revealed that, in terms of demography, the bureaucracy in Nepal is gender, religion and caste biased, it favors Hindu males who belong to the upper caste (2009, p. 208). However the GLOBE results show that gender egalitarianism in Southern Asia is at the medium level.

In Nepal long future planning is not so well practiced in the organizations. There is no connection between planners and implementers. This influences performance and achievement of goals for future preparation. In the GLOBE findings the Southern Asia countries including Nepal are at the medium level in future orientation.

Nepalese are living by taking each other into consideration. Like in many developing countries nepotism is practiced. In organizations family ties and political pressure are used instead of human resource management to hire personnel. Name, caste, and political affiliation all play a role in whether someone is given employment (Feller 2009, p. 148). As it has been stated above, Southern Asia countries scored at the high level in in-group collectivism dimension.

In summary, table 2 below shows the cultural comparison between Finland and Southern Asia countries, (Nepal). It relies on nine GLOBE cultural dimensions as have been discussed in the previous headings (Finnish and Nepalese culture).

The table shows that uncertainty avoidance, future orientation and institutional collectivism are higher in Finland than in Nepal. At the same time, humane orientation and in-group collectivism are higher in Nepal than in Finland. Perfor-

mance orientation is low in Finland while is middle in Nepal. The remaining dimensions such as power distance, gender egalitarianism, and assertiveness appeared to be at the same middle level to both countries.

Dimensions	Country	
	Finland	Southern Asia (Nepal)
Uncertainty avoidance	High	Middle
Power distance	Middle	Middle
Gender egalitarianism	Middle	Middle
Humane orientation	Low	High
Future orientation	High	Middle
Performance orientation	Low	Middle
In-group collectivism	Low	High
Institutional collectivism	High	Middle
Assertiveness	Middle	Middle

Table 2. Cultural comparison between Nepal and Finland

3 Empirical research

In this chapter the study will discuss the details of the research and present empirical findings. As it has been explained above, the culture of Arbonaut Ltd. will be studied and analyzed, therefore before discussing and analyzing the intercultural conflicts, the data of Arbonaut Ltd's. culture will be analyzed.

3.1 Data analysis of the Arbonaut Ltd's. culture

The culture of the Arbonaut Ltd. will be analyzed from the results of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was sent electronically to all Arbonaut employees. From 80 employees whom the questionnaires were sent only 26 provided their responses. The questionnaire was based on the nine GLOBE cultural dimensions. Ten questions were asked and they were followed by open questions (comments) after each question except the tenth one. At the beginning of the questionnaire background questions were asked. The questions were structured in the English language and with five-scale-meter: 1 Disagree, 2 Slightly disagree, 3 Not applicable, 4 Slightly agree, 5 Agree. (see Appendix 1). The

responses of the questionnaire were analyzed by using a coding method whereby excel software was deployed.

Among 26 respondents, 18 were male and 8 respondents were female, corresponding to 69% and 31% respectively. The majority of the respondents 14 were Finns and the remaining 12 were from different nationalities, 54% and 46% respectively. The age of the respondents ranges between 23 to 50 years.

Data presentation and analysis

3.1.1 Uncertainty avoidance

The statement “Risk and uncertainties are well taken into consideration” is connected with the uncertainty avoidance dimension. According to the responses, 38% of the respondents answered slightly agree, 31% slightly disagreed, 15% of the respondents agreed with statement, 12% answered not applicable and only 4% disagreed with the statement. The following is a respondent’s comment.

“I think they are taken into considerations. But some projects are risky and you either do not take them, but not grow too much, or you take them but grow fast (or fail). It is a brave politic what Arbonaut has, that allows to work on such an innovative and interesting projects, other companies can not provide, but one of the prices are exactly risks and uncertainties. But, it is really important to notice, employees are told about these risks. So, it is not like directors play with us, we know anything could happen.”

The theory states that, people in high uncertainty avoidance cultures actively seek to decrease the probability of unpredictable future events that could adversely affect the operation of an organization or society and remedy the success of such adverse effects. Thus, the finding shows that at a medium level the company considers risks and uncertainties during their plan. The results appeared differently from that of the GLOBE cultural investigation, which shows the Finns score high on uncertainty avoidance. The chart below shows the study findings.

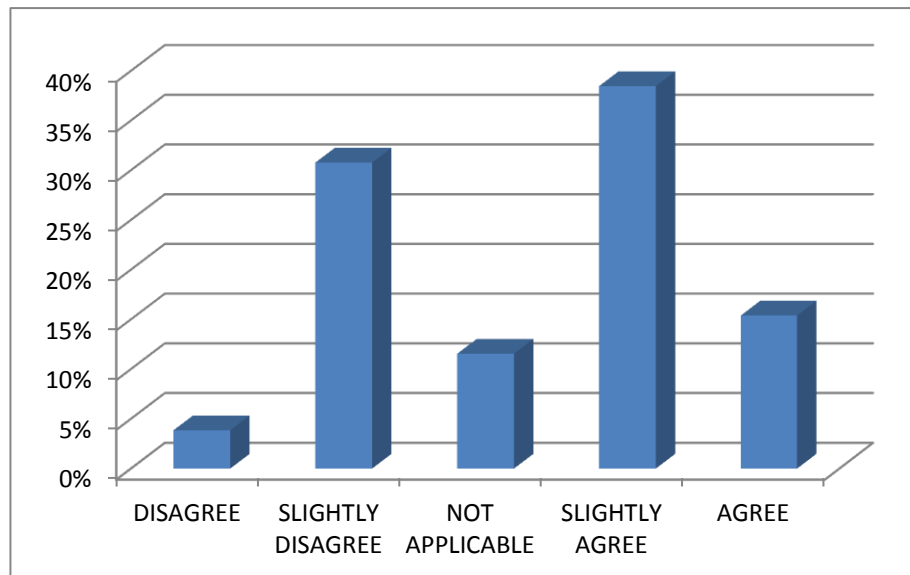


Chart 1. Risk and uncertainties are well taken into consideration.

3.1.2 Power distance

Power distance is measured by the statement “The Company’s decisions are made in group discussions”. According to chart 2, 40% of the respondents slightly agreed, 24% of people slightly disagreed with the statement, 16% answered “not applicable”, 16 % disagreed with the statement and 4% of the respondents agreed with the statement. It shows that although people’s views are considered, individuals make decisions within their responsibilities as some respondents commented.

“People’s views are taken into consideration but in the end usually one person makes the call. It’s the most effective way to make decisions”.

“I haven’t seen a decision made in a group. This is a leader run company”.

“This is actually positive, each team has individuals who take more responsibility e.g. in decisions than the others do”.

The theory said that societies that practice low power distance involve people in discussion and decision making and members are free to express their views to the authority. The chart 2 describes that 44% of the respondents are among those who answered agree and slightly agree and on the other side 40% of the respondents are among those who answered disagree and slightly disagree with the statements. Due to these results, it can be concluded that the study

correspond from that of the GLOBE cultural investigation. The GLOBE study shows that Finland scores at a middle level in power distance, just as this research, too.

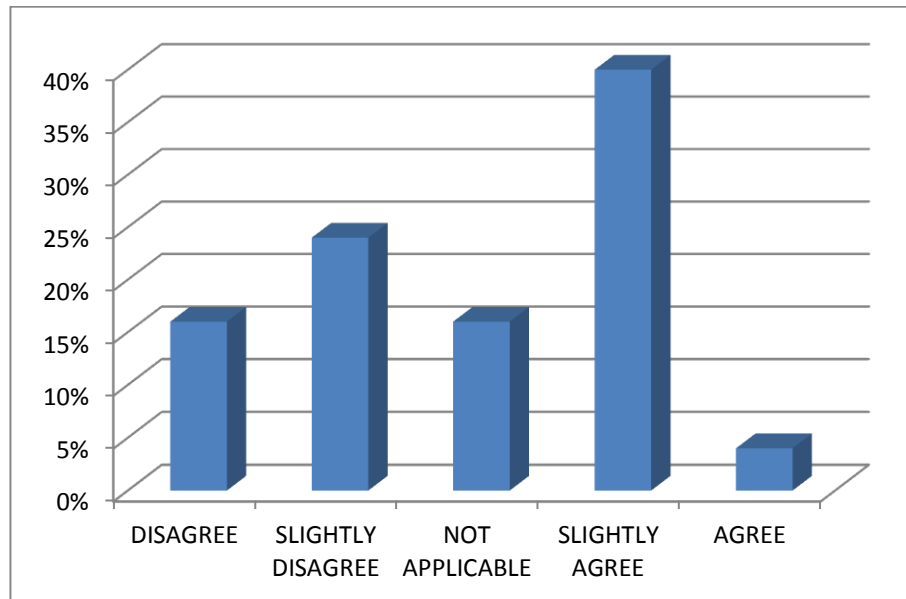


Chart 2. The company's decisions are made in group discussions.

3.1.3 Gender egalitarianism

The statement "In the company there is no sex segregation" is connected with the cultural dimension of gender egalitarianism. The results show that the majority (69%) of the respondents agreed, 27% of the respondents slightly agreed, 4% people slightly disagreed and none of the respondents disagreed with the statement.

From this result it shows that the company treats all people in the same way regardless of their gender as some of the respondents provided their comments:

"Absolutely, no sex segregation".

"I can see almost equal".

"I have never notice any of this".

Although the above respondents provided their comments to support the statement some other respondents commented a little bit differently.

“Once you are worker, things are ok. If you are on manager level, you don't get your opinion, ideas heard if you are a woman”.

“Not basically. A management keeps gender balance quite well, but sometimes being a girl is too “girly”. It is not always obvious, but occasionally it shows”.

The theory states that a society or organization of less occupational sex segregation is a sign of high gender egalitarianism. The GLOBE cultural investigation shows that Finnish organizations have middle gender egalitarianism. However, the findings of this study became rather different. High gender egalitarianism is practiced in Arbonaut. The results are described in chart 3.

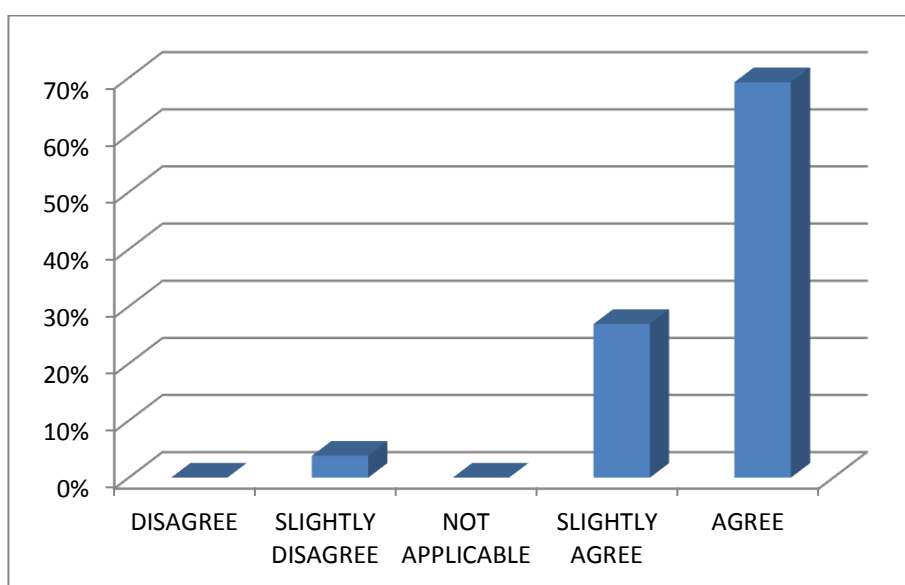


Chart 3. In the company there is no sex segregation.

3.1.4 Humane orientation

To the statement “Rationality in behaviour is emphasized rather than humanity” is related with humane orientation. The responses show that, 32% of the respondents slightly agreed, 28% answered “not applicable”, 28% slightly disagreed, 12% disagreed with the statements and no respondents totally agreed with the statement. Some respondents commented as shown below:

“I think it is exactly in the golden middle. I believe both rationality and humanity should be used in the management and human interaction in general, and none

of them should surpass another. So I am really satisfied how they are used in Arbonaut.”

“Both are emphasized.”

“Very much so. Even to the extent that is harmful to the company. I think there should be at least some level of responsibility to be a sound part of the system. If someone is clearly not up to the job they should be let go or moved to other responsibilities. In some cases poorly done work early on causes more harm than good later on in the process. It can be very frustrating and actually slows down work in big picture.”

The theory shows that society that considers other people such as friends, community, and family are important has high human orientation. The GLOBE cultural study shows that Finland is at a low level in humane orientation but they found Finns are friendly and ready to help. Although the comments show to support the statement, only 32% of the responses answered slightly agree and none of them agree with the statement. Thus, the results shows to correspond to that of the GLOBE study. Arbonaut is low in humane orientation.

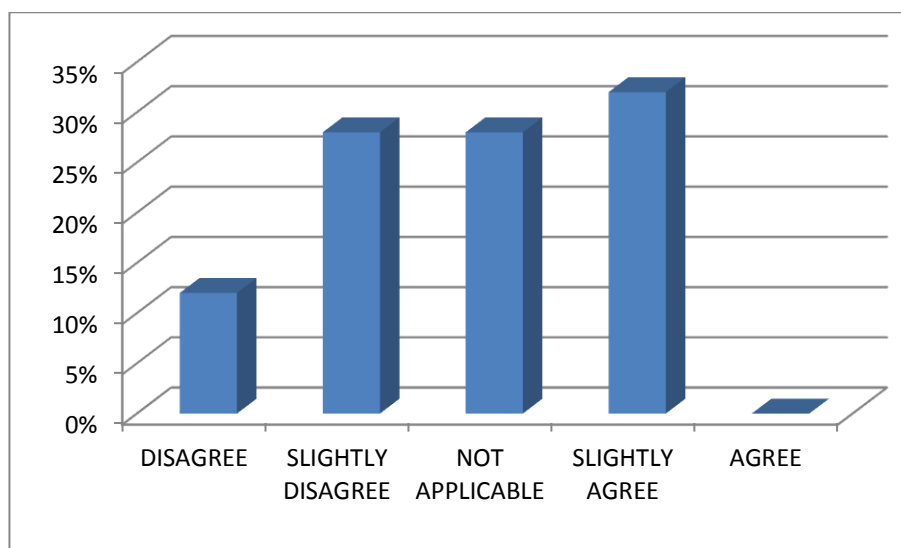


Chart 4. Rationality in behaviour is emphasized rather than humanity.

3.1.5 Future orientation

Future orientation was measured with statement “Planning for future is highly appreciated” which determine whether the company has longer strategies on its plan. The results in chart 5 show that 46% and 31% of the respondents answered slightly agree and agree respectively, 12% said not applicable, 8% slightly disagreed and only 4% disagreed with the statement. Some respondents commented that:

“May be some more discussions on personal goals/points of interest could be beneficial for both parties in the long run.”

“Whenever it’s possible to plan well ahead”

Bearing in mind that future orientation theory explains there are differences between the longer and shorter strategic orientation societies. Future orientation is high if people value longer future planning and vice versa. According to the GLOBE cultural investigation, Finland has high level of future orientation. Thus the results of the study prove the GLOBE cultural investigation score on this dimension.

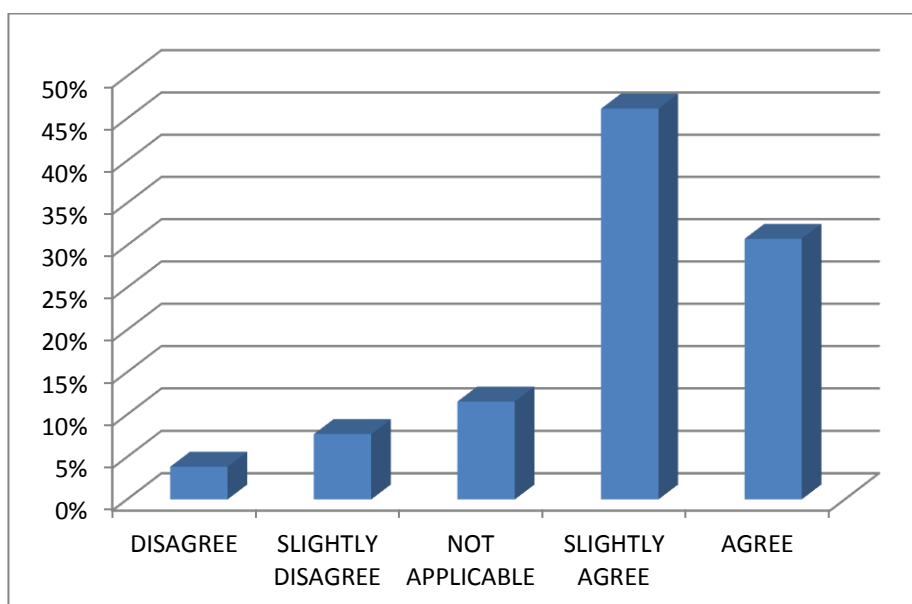


Chart 5. Planning for future is highly appreciated.

3.1.6 Performance orientation

The next statement “Arbonaut’s management value what one does more than who one is” is connected with performance orientation. According to the results, 44% of the respondents agreed, 32% of the people slightly agreed, 12% answered not applicable, 8% and 4% of the respondents disagreed and slightly disagreed with the statement respectively. Some respondents gave their comments as follows:

“Doing is highly valued in Arbonaut”

“It is obvious that it is a company and it is important for them what we do but they consider as well who we are”.

“Appearance and social skills matter as in all human activity. It is however very important that these preferences are kept low-key from the management/owner”.

Basically, the theory states that, performance orientation is high whenever the organization value what one does more than who one is. The results of the findings show that the company’s performance orientation is at a high level, which appeared differently from that of the GLOBE results that shows Finland is at a low level. The chart below shows how respondents answered.

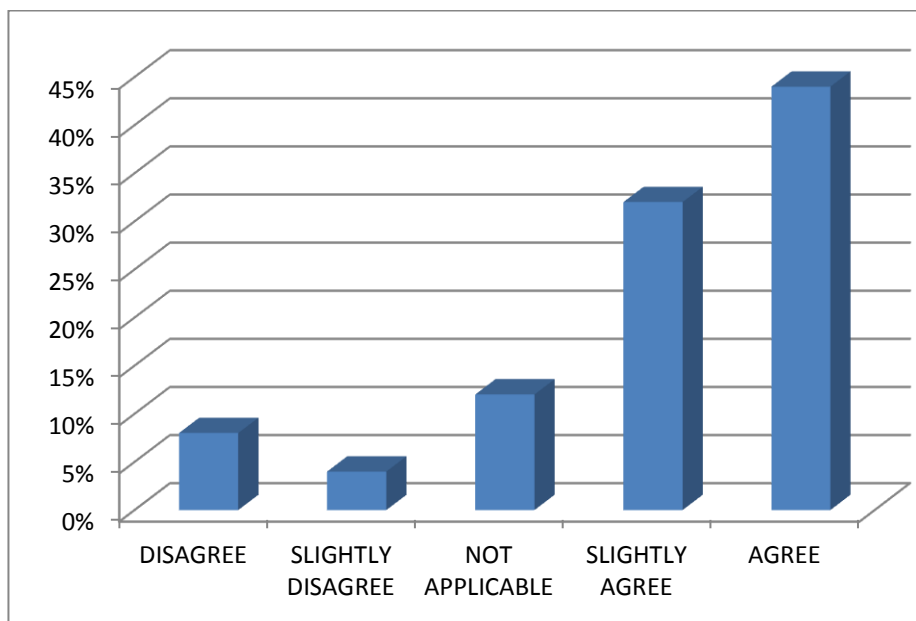


Chart 6. Arbonaut’s management value what one does more than who one is.

3.1.7 In-group collectivism

Next statement “Employees are concerned about each other” is related to in-group collectivism dimension. According to the results shown in chart 7 below, 58% of the respondents were slightly agree, 23% of the respondents agreed with the statement, 12% were slightly disagree, 8% answered “not applicable” and no one disagreed with the statement. At the same time many respondents wrote down their comments to support the statement, some of them quoted as follows.

“Often everyone helps each other on tough times but in the end, you are on your own.”

“So if one has trouble with work or something else, the other would help and try to understand if problem affects his/her own work. But people are not concerned too much. In a sense, they try to not disturb each other or impose his/her own opinion, which is really healthy attitude on my point of view.”

The theory explains that the higher collectivism in society is, the more the relatedness with groups is emphasized. The GLOBE investigation shows that Finnish society is low in in-group collectivism. This study is not supportive to the GLOBE investigations. The results show that in-group collectivism is rather high in Arbonaut Ltd.

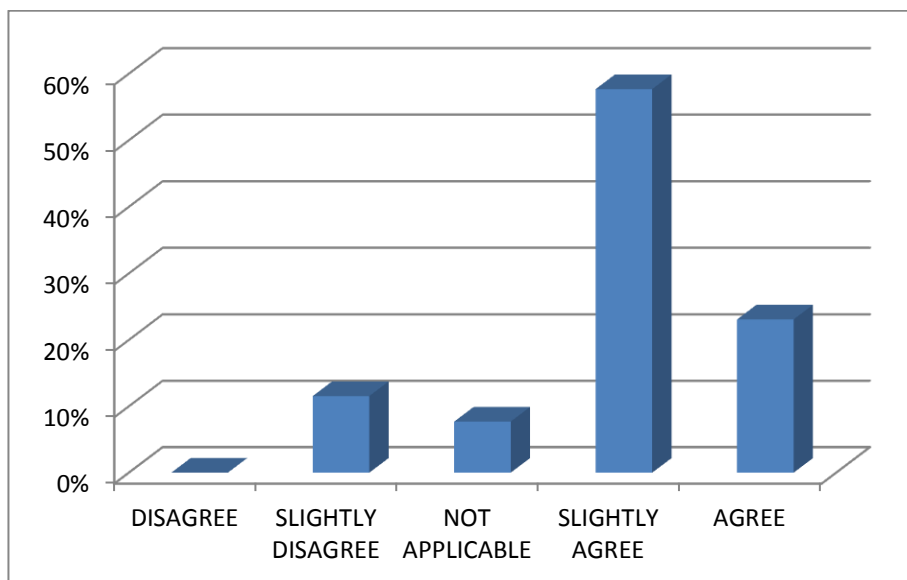


Chart 7. Employees are concerned about each other.

3.1.8 Institutional collectivism

“Information is widely shared in the company” is a statement which represents institutional collectivism dimension. The responses show that, 35% of the respondents answered slightly agree, 27% answered agree, 27% answered slightly disagree, 8% disagreed with the statement and the remaining 4% answered “not applicable”. Some provided comments are shown below;

“All rights and benefits are not made clear to the foreign employees. I know them because I am Finnish and I belong to a union, but there are several employees (foreign and freshly graduated, not experienced) that do not know their rights when considering over time work hours, reasonable pay check, holidays, legal rights etc. It concerns me. I doubt that there are not too many people in the office telling these things in general. People do not question their status”.

“I think the workers should be a little better informed of the status of the company financially and the future orders. May be a quarterly recap letter of the situation from the owner.”

“This totally depends on the situation. Good news is often widely shared but “bad” news which especially considers employees are not.”

“Communication should be definitely increased. Different learning methods and nationalities should be taken more into consideration. The issue has been recognized and it has tried to be improved.”

As it shows in the theory, people that are associated with wide sharing of information are classified members of high institutional collectivism. According to the comments above and from the results in chart 8, it can be concluded that information is shared in the company but not in a very high level. The GLOBE investigation shows that Finland performed in a high level in institutional collectivism but this study shows that Arbonaut is more or less at the middle level.

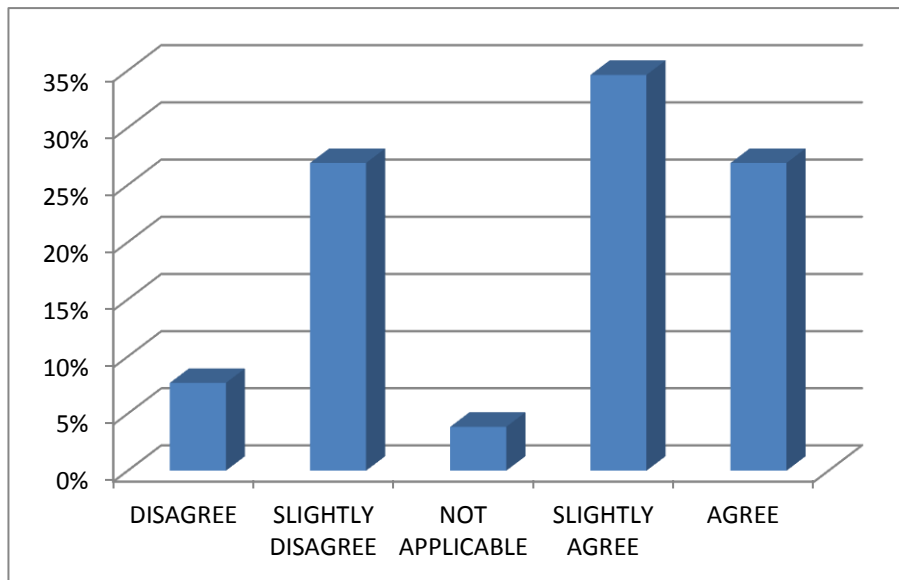


Chart 8. Information is widely shared in the company.

3.1.9 Assertiveness

The last statement “Arbonaut company considers institutions (Educational system, Church, Parliament)” is connected with the assertiveness. The statement was meant to mean that, does Arbonaut Ltd, has cooperation with institutions or even teams in or outside the company. The results were as follows; the same amounts of 32% of respondents answered slightly agree with the statement and “not applicable”, 20% of the respondents answered slightly disagree, only 16% of the respondents agreed with the statement, and no respondent totally disagreed with the statement.

The theory shows that unlike in high assertive societies that value competition, in low assertive societies cooperation with other organizations or institutions is more valued. The results are supportive to that of the GLOBE cultural investigation, which states that Finland scores at the middle level in assertiveness.

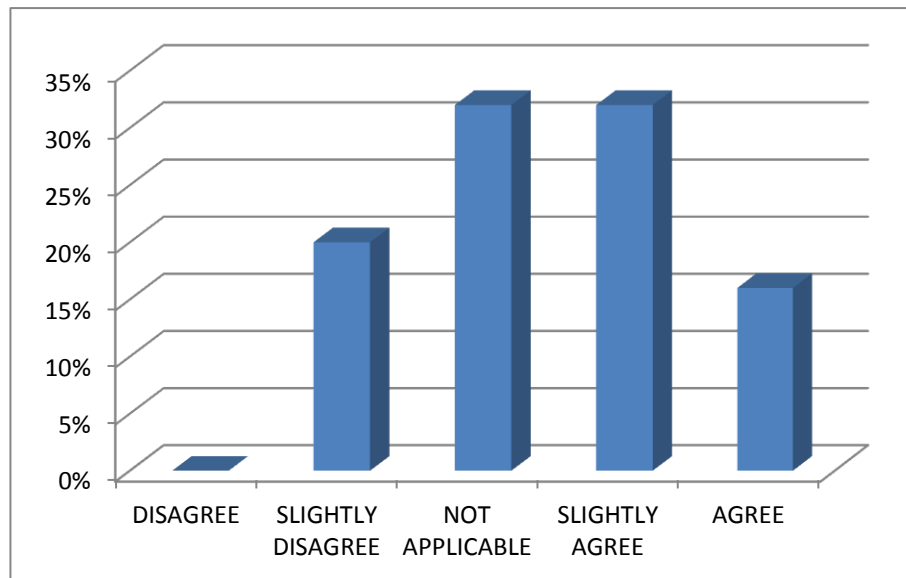


Chart 9. Arbonaut company considers institutions (Educational system, Church, Parliament).

3.2 Data analysis on intercultural conflicts in Terai Arc Landscape, Nepal

In this study the intercultural conflicts data was collected by using five interviews. Because the study investigated the practical problem that happened during the LiDAR field campaign, the interviewees were specific, only those who were involved in the project were the targeted ones. The interviews were performed with the team members. Three were from the international team and two interviewees were from the Nepalese team.

The interview was structured in the English language and 25 questions were asked. (see Appendix 2). All questions were open to provide opportunity to the interviewees to explain the conflicting environment in detail.

The interview began with four introduction questions in which background information of the interviewees was obtained. Subsequent questions were related to the main theme of the study to find answers to the sources of the intercultural conflicts. More than one question were asked relating on one dimension so as to find diverse and clear opinions from the interviewees. All questions, except the last one, were strictly based on the nine GLOBE cultural dimensions as ex-

plained in the theory part. The last question was structured to get the interviewees' comments about the conflicts.

The contact with interviewees was started in February 2012 when two international interviewees out of five participants were interviewed. From there forth, process of finding other interviewees was started; one from the international team and three from the Nepalese team. Three interviews were conducted within three months ahead, one of the international team and two of the Nepalese team. The last interview has not been conducted after a very long contact between the author and interviewee, likely because of the interviewee's busy schedule. The first two interviews were conducted face to face at the Arbonaut Ltd. office where the researcher went purposefully for interviewing them. From the remaining three interviews; two were conducted through Skype and one through telephone. This is because the interviewees were far from the interviewer to access them face to face. Two interviewees were in Sweden and one in Nepal. The interviews took 35 to 60 minutes and all of them were recorded.

The interviewees had different management status in the LiDAR field campaign. They were as follows: 1) The leader of technology experts. 2) Organizer and manager of the field campaign. 3) Lidar crew leader. 4) Manager of the advisor group 5) Leader of technology and application expert. Unfortunately none of the interviewees is Finnish by nationality, four are Nepalese and one is Danish.

The data was analyzed using a qualitative method of coding topics areas and searching for the themes. Instead of using the interviewees' own names Interviewee A, Interviewee B, etc. will be used in the analysis. Since the study dealing with two teams interviewees has been identified as follows; Interviewee A, Interviewee B and Interviewee C belong to the international team, and Interviewee D and Interviewee E belong to the Nepalese team.

As it has been shown in Table 2, Finnish and Nepalese culture differs in some of cultural dimensions. This may influence cultural contradictions if these two cultures collide. In the analysis of intercultural conflicts data, the conflicts environment will be analysed at the beginning of the chapter to create a clear pic-

ture of this clashes. After that, the sources of the conflicts will be deeply analysed by reflecting nine GLOBE cultural dimensions.

The interview was started with a question that was asked to get the general idea of the conflicts on what happened in the field during the project. The responses are shown below;

“Actually, this project has been formed by multicultural and multinational groups, consisting international and national groups. ... There are some problems between the international team and local people, international team and national team in many ways. National and international team were different in perceptions, different ways of thinking, and different ways of working. So, those ways were not compatible in many ways. There were conflicts between the international and national team during the project implementation phase especially in the field but there was no problem in the center at management level...” (Interviewee A).

“Yeah! Actually only when we started this project, there was a little bit conflict between international experts and Nepalese team”... (Interviewee B).

“...Most of the representatives from the government they cause a lot of problems when we were in Kathmandu but once when we were out, at the field, then, there was no problem.” (Interviewee C).

Like the international team interviewees, quoted above, the Nepalese team interviewees also agree that there were differences between the teams. Since they were of different nationalities, misunderstanding between them appeared and became a source of conflicts.

“Sometimes there were misunderstandings between the group and within the group because the project was quite big. There are two people from Finland had a problem with our group. ...I think the main problem is; they are from different nationalities and we don't know what they think. I think something more or less miscommunication.” (Interviewee D).

“The main problem may be there is miscommunication, and is like there are from different countries, different regions. ...the main problem is different vision, different culture.” (Interviewee E).

According to the interview results, intercultural conflicts happened during the project because of cultural differences. The contradictions occurred between the international team and Nepalese team as well as between the international team and the local people as it has been explained above.

After showing the general idea on what the situation was in TAL area, the following is the analysis on how the conflicts happened by reflecting those nine CLOBE cultural dimensions.

3.2.1 Uncertainty avoidance

The research attempted to know how the tasks were organized during the project. At the beginning of the project, organization of tasks was a little bit not so good according to the interviewees' responses from both teams. However, in the next phase, activities were well planned and tasks were well organized by the team members according to the Interviewee D and C from the Nepalese and international team respectively.

"Yes, it was good. In the previous plan there were some lacking may be not too much preparation or something else. But, latter phase we involved these professional people to plan, and give us a plan how many days is to measure this kind of forest area and a number of plots.... we have very improved plan and improved task distribution. Well organized tasks assigned to them. We have better results and time competitors because of this well planned. " (Interviewee D).

"Yes, it was ok. We have to organize because they were absolutely not competent to do the job ... and then we organize the people and then we got a real thing." (Interviewee C).

Since the theory states that the importance of managing time and dealing effectively with the timetable is one way of avoiding risks, one more question relating to this dimension was asked. The question sought information on whether the teams managed to follow their schedule as planned. In spite of finishing those assigned tasks and reaching the project goals as planned, some contradictions happened due to differences in time management which facilitated conflict between the teams. It is not only Interviewee A from international team who complains about time management but Interviewee D from Nepalese team does that too.

"Again, issue of culture, tradition,especially Finnish people they are very tight ...very goal oriented. We as a culture, we are more or less process oriented. We should follow the process, whether they are dealing with us in right way or not, for example. So, Nepalese culture is a little bit process oriented and social oriented somehow but they are improving. People like us we are improving this kind of culture. So that could be the reason that foreigners were a little bit

not happy in this culture at that time but they should know the culture and make the situation accordingly. We can't change by night..." (Interviewee A).

"Yes, they are very strict on time. Sometimes Nepal people don't care about their time but the international people (foreigners) they were very concern on time. ... People from Finland like to do this work within this time. So, work as much as you can. People from Nepal, they said, 'no we can't do'..." (Interviewee D).

On the other hand, sometimes difficulties on managing time happened because of different reasons that are out of the field campaigners' control. It was either a natural or governmental problem as Interviewee C, D and E explain.

"...and of course some time there were good reasons in different conditions. Things could be so difficult, example, could be terrain, maps could be bad, maybe we had a road in the map but it is not exist....." (Interviewee C).

"Yes we did it, it was appreciated. The basis is minor issues. Sometimes wild animals we didn't work in time, for example." (Interviewee D).

"Yeah, I think so. They are following timetable. The main conflict was to finish in time. The main problem was like weather and difficulties to work. Sometimes there were Nepalese Banda (strike) you can not work on that. You can't drive. So it was the main problem to finish in time..." (Interviewee E).

The results show that, organization of work was not so good at the beginning of the project. However during the next phase, activities were well organized. Another problem was the management of time during the project. Besides having some difficulties, it was not easy for the Nepalese team to strictly follow the timetable. The theory states that low uncertainty avoidance society is characterized by unclear structure of the plan, less organized work, inconsistency in performing activities and time is considered less important. Table 2 shows that Finland score high on uncertainty avoidance compared to Nepal. It can be said that, this is the reason of conflicts that happened between the international team and Nepalese team due to their differences in organization of work and managing time.

3.2.2 Power distance

The study also found out facts about the conflicting issues by considering differences of power between top and lower people in the teams. The interviewees were asked if there was a big difference between the group leaders and other

members of the team. Interviewee A and interviewee B of the international team come with the different answers from that of the Interviewee E of the Nepalese team.

“Yeah, Sometimes is a little bit there were problems in the politics, especially from the forests in Nepal, the seniority matters a lot. Example, in some cases we have a group leader, assistance group leaders and other group members. In some cases because of the technical knowledge, we give the group leader position to the junior one while the senior were under this junior guy but sometimes we have to follow this seniority and juniority issue... (Was there any conflicting issue?) Yes, it happened in some cases we need to change the group - we have to change the groups’ settings also - because of this problem. Because the senior people won’t work under this junior one....We made in such a way that those who have the forestry degree we give them group leaders, those who do not have forest degree but some other degrees we gave them assistance members. In this group formation, then, the seniority and juniority issue came from”. (Interviewee B).

“That is true! (To what extent?) The extent was that, (Names omitted) came back. Both were replaced - they were replaced. ...but that was not the only reason for (Name omitted) to be replaced... If you are not respecting the differences people will defy.of course you should trust them.” (Interviewee A).

“No, not so much there were not quit big differences. We were like the same. They give us training more or less the same...” (Interviewee E).

To compare these responses from both sides of the teams, it shows that, differences in terms of power, the status that someone has in the project management, existed. Some of the international members who have high status were not providing good respect to the Nepalese crews. Also within the Nepalese team members there were issues of authority where crews struggle for status during the project.

Moreover, according to the interviewees’ responses from both teams, the lower people from the Nepalese team were not involved in planning and organizing tasks at the beginning of the project. Only the top leaders from international team and Nepalese team made decisions on all processes including assigning tasks. Interviewee D and B from the Nepalese team and international team respectively explain.

“Yes, in the beginning we had a problem. For the first phase, we had some problem. For example, we plan ourselves and then tell them go to the field and then do this and do this. ...therefore we faced little bit problems there. Then, next time from the lesson to learn from the first phase, what we did for the next

phase we involved them from the very beginning...finally we got success. If the people were involved in the plan themselves, definitely they have motivated then you will have better results. This is the learning from this forest project for me..." (Interviewee D).

"... because the mentality of the Nepalese team is that, they want to decide themselves. For example, being an international expert you can't tell them to wake up at 6:00 morning and go to the field, you will not do this. If you give them responsibilities; this is the work that we have to do, plan yourself. First, our international experts they did like this: they wake up at 7:00 at morning have some food and go to the field and measure the plots. It didn't work. Latter after finishing this plan, we told that, we have to change the strategies. What we did we form 6 groups to collect the field data and one group were comprises 5, 6 people. We give money to them, these are the plots that we need to collect, this is the place that you need to go, these are the materials and money for you. At the beginning we didn't give that kind of responsibilities... But before that when somebody the international expert handling in such a way, they (Nepalese crews) told that, "what they think about us, we should decide also".... That kind of mentality they (Nepalese) have. Then, they were very happy." (Interviewee B).

In addition to this dimension other questions were asked. The research sought the information whether the local people were informed about the project and the arrival of the foreign team. All interviewees from the Nepalese team, quoted below, deny that local people were informed before starting the project.

"Not, previously not but during the field visit we tried to describe them what we are doing, but it was not planned..." (Interviewee D).

"In every parts was not informed but most of the parts they have been informed that they are coming, they are doing this project. (Did you inform them when you were already in the field?) Yes, when we were there, not in all places but most of the places". (Interviewee E).

The theory states that in high power distance society, lower people were less involved in discussions and decision making, and differences between top and lower members are higher. Although Nepal, Finland and Arbonaut Ltd. are at the same middle level in power distance, the conflicts happened. The results show that local people were not fully involved in the project. They were deprived from the opportunity of getting information about the project. They were not informed before the arrival of field campaigners into their regions. This became a source of conflict between the field campaigners and local people since local people did not know what was going on in their forest regions. In another case, the authority issues happened in the project areas when the differences be-

tween seniority and juniority in the Nepalese groups rose misunderstanding within the team. It should be known that this conflict involved only the Nepalese themselves without including the international team. Again, subordinates were not involved in discussion and decision making at the beginning of the project. They did not take part in discussion of the project matters. Moreover, regarding status differences, some international experts showed less respect to the Nepalese members, according to interviewee A above. These issues influenced conflicts between the international team and Nepalese team as well as local Terai people.

3.2.3 Gender egalitarianism

The study investigated the position of women and how they were treated during the LiDAR field campaign. Fortunately there were nine women involved in this project and some of them were leaders of the groups. It has been found that there was no serious discrimination in terms of gender according to the responses of Interviewee D and E.

“Now it is normally in Nepal because women are involving in different activities. Therefore it is not the unique case, it is common.” (Interviewee D).

“This like, ladies are like fragile but when we work then they appreciate it. (Didn’t you experience any kind of discrimination?) Not so much, they provide me my assistance also a lady so that when I’m in the field I was not feeling not so much harassed. The group was good they help me any time when I need help.” (Interviewee E).

One interviewee from the international team quoted below explains that, gender discrimination issues happened during the project but according to him it had no influences on conflicts between the teams, it was only within the Nepalese themselves. In that way, it did not cause any conflict between the international team and Nepalese team or local people.

“No, not actually but this was among the Nepalese, not toward me - only among the Nepalese. They discriminated each other because of this caste they have or because of gender.” (Interviewee C).

Reflecting to the theory, the higher the society in gender egalitarianism, the lower the discrimination in term of biological differences is considered. Nepal and Finland appeared to have the same level in gender egalitarianism as it has

been shown in Table 2. Therefore, according to the results, the conflict between the teams did not take place in this dimension since women were treated almost equally as men.

3.2.4 Humane orientation

For more investigation of the problem, the study intended to know whether the project was conducted with good relationships between the field campaigners. It shows the project was conducted in a way that help was provided among the team members and between the international team and Nepalese team. In spite of some differences, members from both teams supported each other. Local people including local leaders also provided support to the teams. This was explained by Interviewee A and Interviewee D from the international team and Nepalese team respectively.

“We have very good relation between international team and Nepalese team. We were working together. We have also a culture to work in multidisciplinary team. So, generally we have a very good relationship with the international team at management level and even in the implementation level but as you know the differences are always there and we have to manage it.” (Interviewee A).

“Yes, because there are many forest user groups.this (Terai) is the forest community. So, we try to find people of that forest areas, may be leaders and some other people from that user group and we took helpthey were so co-operative and respond very well. Some time for what happens, for example, there was a forest fire the local people went with us and help us a lot to put out this fire.” (Interviewee D).

In addition to humane orientation dimension, the study also asked if there were friendships established in this project among the team members from both sides of the teams or local people. During the project people got chances to make friends within and between their teams. Also some members of the team made friends with the local people and created a good relationship, as international team members explain.

“...I tried to make friends. I don't like to make any mistake. So, I made many friends, although Arbonaut were popular and very good friends. I had a lot from them” (Interviewee A).

“Of course a lot of friends. Very good relationship. Actually, they (local Terai people) praised to us they asked us to come again and to help them.” (Interviewee B).

On the side of the Nepalese team, they also made good friendships during this field campaign.

“Yes, within the local people. I have made not almost but some of them are my friends still. And the international team also.” (Interviewee E)

Relating to the theory high humane orientation society, people feel others are more important. Although the table 2 shows Finland and Nepal are quite differed; while Finns are low, Nepalese are high on human orientation, the results show that, conflicts did not take place in this dimension. People were working cooperatively and helped each other.

3.2.5 Future orientation

The question was asked if the local Terai people appreciated with the forest service provided by the LiDAR field campaigners in their areas. If local people appreciated forestry services, they may have hope of having good forests for their future. Interviewee A and Interviewee E below respond positively that local people appreciated the forestry services.

“Yeah! Actually forest service consists of many things in Nepal. Nepalese people are very close to the forest for their livelihood, for their daily use and for their activities. ...Our people reason why we are coming in that particular forest, we oriented them - the reasons why we are coming in that particular forest - they trusted us, they support us.” (Interviewee A).

“Yes.” (Interviewee E)

However, Interviewee D from the Nepalese team answered somehow different from the quotations above. The quotation below explains that some of the local people did not appreciate their services because they were not aware of what the campaigners were doing in the forests.

“I say partly yes, partly no because they don’t know what we do...” (Interviewee D).

The project team members of both teams are well aware of the importance of forests for the sake of the Nepalese as well as the world at large. The interna-

tional and Nepalese team members show to have good hope for the future of the Terai forests as interviewee A and D respectively respond to the additional question in future orientation dimension.

“All forests of Nepalese belonging to the Government but we are transferring in the management and use right to the people. We leave more than 25% of national forests to the community and community is the manager of the national forest by law. So that, I see the future of the Nepalese forest is bright, is good. ...we have to reveal our position by showing the data that our community, our people and our government is managing such kind of forests, storing the caravans to mitigate the climate change. ...So this project is very important to reveal our position where we are.” (Interviewee A).

“We are planning to assess our forest resources. How much forest we have, what kind of forest we have, and then we plan to monitor in the period basis. Forest is the one most economic resource in Nepal. ...I hope we will have better opportunities, better help from the international committees as well, because we are also contributing on mitigating the global warming.” (Interviewee D).

Although members from both teams are optimistic for the future of the Nepal's forests, the project environment was not so smooth for the campaigners to collect data. Some local people did not welcome the project field crews to take measurements in the forests as Interviewee B explains.

“Is not always positive there are some villagers also they didn't welcome us. For instance, they didn't allow some of our field crews to measure the forests. They said that, because they are angry with the Forest Department and they say that probably we are from the Forest Department, they don't want to allow us to measure the forest. They are these cases also the two sides of coin negative - positive...” (Interviewee B).

On the side of the Nepalese team, they explain the issues of illegal activities that were done in the forest, which made local people not to welcome them because of fear.

“In Terai, if we explain them we are here in the forest issues, they were very happy. ...in forest areas some people afraid of us because we came from the forest with vehicle, since they are involved in the deforestation, illegal kinds of things were ongoing in some areas so some of them afraid of us.... (Didn't they hurt you?) No, no, no, they never did”. (Interviewee D).

In spite of having one goal of good Nepal's future forests, some of the local Terai people did not warmly welcome the project teams. Also only some of the local Nepalese showed appreciation of this forest service, because they did not know what was going on in this field campaign. At the same time some of the

local people were conducting illegal activities in these forests. Reflecting to the theory, in low future orientation society, people have a propensity to spend now. Table 2 shows that Nepal is at middle level at future orientation while Finland at high. To consider the interviewees answers, it can be said that, conflict happened between project campaigners and local people during the measurement of the TAL forest area. This occurred because of less information the local people have got about the project. It also happened due to the fact that, local people were against with their Forest Department. The former case has been discussed in detail in another dimension above i.e. power distance.

3.2.6 Performance orientation

The study investigated if both teams accomplished their responsibilities as planned. The responses from both sides of the teams are shown to support this statement. Below is the response of the Interviewee C from the international team followed by the Interviewee D from the Nepalese team.

“Yeah, I think we did.” (Interviewee C).

“As a team, yes, we did it in the time frame.” (Interviewee D).

Another point that was made regarding performance orientation is whether the team members had got any training about technical and cultural knowledge before the project started.

“Yes, we have different training to this project, how to form the team, how to connect the work, how to organize in the field, how to implement in the field, and how to involve people in the field. We have different kinds of training there. ... there are a lot of professional training.” (Interviewee A).

“Yes, of course we organize three training to our groups where we were going to the local people to collect the data. So they were well trained..... The Nepalese people were in the team, they know how to work in the region. Most important we involved the local forester from Nepal. So, they know what to do.” (Interviewee B).

“Yes, they give us training.” (Interviewee E).

However, interviewee C and D hold the absolutely opposite response regarding the training as is shown here:

“No, I didn’t get any training, I just went there. Of course, forestry related things those I know. I had been some weeks in Nepal fixing the goal of the project but I didn’t get any specific training.” (Interviewee C).

“No, not at all.” (Interviewee D).

The theory explains that in high performance orientation, society emphasises results and values training for more development. Unlike Nepal, Finland is low in performance orientation, however, in the LiDAR field campaign all teams accomplished their responsibilities and achieved the goal according to the interviewees’ responses. Hence conflict did not happen due to the clashes of less performance from either team. In other point, the results seem to have contradictions while some members of the international team agree, some disagree that training was provided before the project. The same happened with the Nepalese team, one interviewee agrees while another one says training was not provided before the project. This shows that some people within the team or some groups got training while others did not. However, this was not a source of conflict since there were no complaints between the team members about deprivation of training opportunities. Moreover, it seems that cultural training was not provided at all to the field campaigners of both sides of the teams since none among the interviewees mentioned about it.

3.2.7 In-group collectivism

In order to find out if any conflicts took place in in-group collectivism dimension, the research asked how assignments were divided among the group members. Unlike the first phase of the project plan, during the second phase, tasks were divided in groups and group leaders from the Nepalese team and the international team discussed together how to distribute tasks to other members (sub-groups). Here under, international team interviewees provide their views followed by the Nepalese team interviewee.

...as I told we found six groups. We together with the Nepalese leaders we discuss what the task to give. It was the combine decision together with the Nepalese leaders.” (Interviewee B).

“We more or less could put the team together when we were in Kathmandu. We put the team together and thereby also assigned the tasks. So we were within in cooperation with both Nepalese and international management.” (Interviewee C).

“...We have to work within a group ... it was not in a big group. ...but also individual, for instance, if I’m a crew leader I have to manage the work on how to do everything.” (Interviewee E).

In in-group collectivism society, people in the position consider relationship rather than rational system that defines all rules and regulation to be equally applicable to all members in the society or organization. One interviewee from the international team experienced this kind of culture practiced by Nepalese during the project. This action rose conflict between the teams.

“There were specially guys from the department who kindly claimed position through interfered with the way we agreed and solving like a technical solutions. I think it was mainly due to this kind of power against that they had. They want some of their person, like colleague, from the department to have a managing role of someone else. Then, it was a problem and we had really hard. ...especially in the government level there are a lot of problem getting people they know, getting friends in the position.” (Interviewee C).

In deep findings of the sources of the conflicts the study investigated discrimination issues. More questions that were targeted to provide information on existence of racial or religious discrimination were asked. According to interviewee A and C, there was no racial or religious discrimination that influenced conflicts during the project.

“Not much. If you are asking for me as a team, I did not feel that - discrimination. There was no discrimination.” (Interviewee A).

“I think in the field there was very good administration, it work. ...it was just one team during one job without thinking so much about the people were from Kathmandu, Norway or Finland.” (Interviewee C).

Like the international team, the Nepalese team totally deny that racial or religious discrimination took place during the project. The quotations below provide evidence of it.

“No. Exactly not, because we were equal. We didn’t feel like that. Because most of the team members were well educated, so, we were in between the educated people. We didn’t have that kind of problems. These kinds of things happen in Nepal and other areas but in that project we didn’t face that kind of problems.” (Interviewee D).

“No, no, no, not, never! In my group, we were different castes and different religious people but never say like you are like this, never. No racial discrimination.” (Interviewee E).

The theory states that, members of high in-group collectivism are urged to be sensitive to all forms of discrimination, such as racial and religious. Although both Nepal and Arbonaut culture are high in in-group collectivism, in the LiDAR field campaign this kind of discrimination did not happen according to the responses of both teams. The Nepalese team working together with the international experts without considering their religious or racial differences. Moreover, in high in-group collectivism, people like to engage in group activities rather than working individuals. The way the tasks were assigned to the field crews were the best method to the Nepalese. Therefore, they performed well their assignments in groups. Hence the conflict did not happen because of the way the tasks were assigned. Again, in societies of high in-group collectivism, people emphasize more relatedness within the groups. Clashes happened between international team and their counterparts since the Nepalese wanted to place their relative in the project management to take managing role of someone else. This case became a source of conflict between the international team and Nepalese team.

3.2.8 Institutional collectivism

Companies differ in how information is shared. Resources which are important in the organization to accomplish assignments can be shared differently to different organizations due to cultural differences. The research found out if there was good and effective sharing of information and tools between the international team and Nepalese team during the project. The results show that both teams were sharing resources and information during the project.

“Our project is collecting data of forest resources Nepal. ...they use resources of the organization ...if resources are not used they are not resources. Therefore we are very willing to share our data, our resources with stake holders in different extent and intensity ...” (Interviewee A).

“I think it did” (Interviewee C).

It seems that tools and information were effectively shared during the project although problem of language difference happened. The interviewee E below explains the problem which existed in exchanging their information. These differences caused some difficulties of understanding to some groups which were

monitored by the international supervisors who were not Nepalese nationals. However, the situation did not rise any conflict between these teams.

“Communication, problem of language, in my country people have Nepali language and they don’t speak English so fluently. So when the international team come and contact with the local people, they don’t understand language. ..but some of the Nepalese people understand English. ...the technical people understand English.” (Interviewee E).

The theory states that in high institutional collectivism, people are collectively distribute resources and information. To compare Finland and Nepal in this dimension, Finland is high while Nepal is at middle score in institutional collectivism. However, the Arbonaut culture is at middle score which correspond to that of the Nepal culture. Due to the responses above conflicts did not happen because of less sharing of resources or information between the teams.

3.2.9 Assertiveness

The author wanted to know if the teams encountered any aggressive behavior from the counterpart members or local people. Referring to the interviewees’ answers from both sides of the teams, some aggressive behaviors happened in different situations.

“Yes, that was in the evening when some of these guys, the two guys, they were working in the government they got quite wrong. ... then, it was very sudden they told us something should be done. They got in louder, may be they were so confident. (What did they do?) I think they had an idea to change the whole design of the project. And we explained them, ‘it is not possible’ and they accepted it. It was just about being stop it and sending a note. We were continued the way we have agreed and of course gave them reasons from the forest point of view... it was these people who were working with us (Were they from the Nepalese team?) of course those from the Nepalese group.” (Interviewee C).

Another team, the Nepalese, also complains about the aggressiveness of the international team for strictly asking the Nepalese crews to work according to the schedule. Interviewee E below explains the case:

“Sometimes they force, like, ‘you have to do this things’.sometimes say ‘do this’..... sometimes when we were in the field, because they have to finish the work within the time, they say ‘you can go in the field from morning to night, from early morning till to late evening’. That was completely without good... We can’t go in the field early morning. That was the problem.” (Interviewee E).

Moreover, in the same dimension the research found out if there was good working ethics in both teams, for instance, the members of from both teams to respect each other in terms of performances and accountabilities. All interviewees responded positively that both teams showed good working ethics, such as respecting how effectively tasks were done. Below the international team provides their views.

“We have to respect all. Actually, if they were not respecting us then we were not going to work together. We have to respect - we are working together - we are the team - we are in the battle...” (Interviewee A).

“Yeah, I think so.” (Interviewee C).

The Nepalese team interviewee comes with the same answer as Interviewee A, and C above.

“Yes, to the international team and local people.” (Interviewee E).

When referring to the theory, highly assertive society tends to value dominant and tough behavior. Table 2 shows that Nepal and Finland are in the middle position in assertiveness, at the same time Arbonaut too. Although neither of these nations/teams shows to have highly assertive culture, aggressiveness which rose conflicts happened between them. The international team wanted the Nepalese crews to strictly work in a certain time frame to accomplish their tasks while this was not convenient for the Nepalese campaigners. Hence, Nepalese saw that they were being forced by their counterparts. On the other hand, the international team faced aggressive behaviour when someone from the Nepalese side tried to interfere the project plan in order to change it. These were the sources of conflicts happened during the LiDAR field campaign.

4. Conclusion

In this section, the results of the findings will be discussed and limitations of the study will be shown. However, recommendations will be also discussed by suggesting the possible ways, which will alleviate intercultural conflicts in future field campaigns.

4.1 Results

The thesis has investigated the causes of the intercultural conflicts, which happened in the LiDAR field campaign in the TAL regions in Nepal. Also it suggests the possible ways, which will alleviate the conflicts in the future field campaigns which will be conducted by these two teams or similar teams in the same environment. As it has been explained above the conflicts were taking place in the field during the measurement of the TAL regions, not only between the international team and Nepalese team, but also international team and local Terai people. The investigation of this research shows that, the conflicts happened because of the differences of cultures, which were incompatible in various ways. The research examined all of these differences by using interviews which reflected directly the nine GLOBE cultural dimensions.

The data analysis shows that time management was one among the sources of conflicts between the international team and the Nepalese team. While the international team strictly tried to manage their time/schedule, the Nepalese team members were not good time keepers. This became a source of conflict that is related to uncertainty avoidance.

Another area where a conflict happened was the involvement of the subordinates in decision making of the project plan at the first phase of the project. Subordinates did not take part in discussions and decision making particularly in those areas related directly to them, such as assigning tasks. This was a source of conflict which happened during the first phase of the project. In another case, some international members did not show high respect to the Nepalese crews. Again, authority was an issue among the Nepalese team since the senior people (superiors) were not ready to be under junior people (subordinates) in spite of being more educated and given high positions in this project. It should be known that, in the latter source of conflict, the international team was not involved, only the Nepalese themselves were struggling for power. All of these sources of conflicts are associated with the power distance dimension.

Again, a conflict happened between some of the local Terai people and field crews. Some of the local people did not warmly welcome the field crews to measure the forests. This is because local people were not informed earlier about the coming of the project teams and the calibration of the forests in their areas. Therefore they did not understand what was going on in the forest, what the project is dealing with. This situation caused by the Nepalese authority as well as the project teams for not involving the local people at the beginning by providing information earlier, before starting the project. This conflict also is connected with the power distance dimension.

When examining the in-group collectivism dimension, conflict environment was also shown. Nepotism, the action that was done by the Nepalese members affected the international team during the project. Officials from the Nepalese side wanted to place their relative in the project management to have a managing role of someone else. This happened after the project plan and procedures had already been decided. The attempt of the Nepalese to place their member who has relationships with another person in authority enhanced a conflict between them and the international team.

Moreover, a conflict happened in the field due to the assertiveness, the actions happened to be done by some of the team members from both sides. These assertive behaviors happened in different cases. First, some members from the international team asked assertively some of the Nepalese groups to finish their work in time as planned. Second, the Nepalese members tried to interfere with the project decisions and wanted to change the whole design of the project. These are sources of conflicts related with the assertiveness.

Another conflict happened between the local people and field crews. Some of the local Terai people did not allow the field crews to calibrate the forests because they were against with their Forest Department (Forest Department of Nepal) and they had an idea that these teams were from the Forest Department. This is the reason of conflict between the local people and the field crews which related to the future orientation dimension. The local people thought

more about the conflict between them and their Department rather than thought about the importance of the forests in the future.

Basically the conflicts were caused by the differences which rose in five dimensions, these are as follows: First, in uncertainty avoidance, time management caused a conflict. The international experts strictly followed the schedule in contrast to the Nepalese side, which caused friction between them. Second, in power distance, some international team members showed less respect to Nepalese regarding their status. In another case, lower field crews were not involved in discussion and planning of the projects' activities. At the first phase of the project subordinates were not involved in deciding about their roles. In addition to power distance dimension, the local Terai people were not fully involved in the project. Local people were not informed before the project about the arrival of the foreign team and conducting the forest campaign in their areas. At the same time they were less informed during the project. This was a source of conflict between the field crews and the local Terai people. Third, in in-group collectivism, nepotism caused a conflict. Clashes between the Nepalese team and international team members happened when the Nepalese tried to place their relative in the project management. Fourth, in assertiveness, the Nepalese crews were asked by the international experts to finish their work in time, the action that Nepalese felt that they were asked by force. Again in assertiveness, some of the Nepalese team members interfered project decisions and wanted to change the whole design of the project. These actions rose conflicts between these two teams. Lastly, in future orientation, some local people did not welcome the field campaigners because of having not so good relationships with their Forest Department. All of these are among the sources of conflicts between the host team and international team as well as the local Terai people.

The investigation shows that in the remaining four cultural dimensions conflicts did not happen. Firstly, in human orientation, not only the Nepalese team members and local people, but also international experts, were ready to work cooperatively and to provide help so as to accomplish the assignments. Secondly, in institutional collectivism, away from the misunderstandings that happened during the measurements of plots, all crews were working as one team under one

goal and resources were shared together without considering national or cultural differences. Thirdly, in gender egalitarianism, there was no discrimination in terms of gender. Women were treated equally as men. The last dimension is performance orientation. Underneath there is the Arbonaut Ltd. President's quotation that shows that the LiDAR field campaigners successfully reached the goal:

"Despite the intense pressure on time and hardship, the team completed its task on time and on budget, in a splendid fashion. As these issues clearly show, the field campaign was a very demanding task for all involved. It testifies to the good will and tenacity of both teams that despite the inter-cultural issues, the oppressive heat, the hard terrain and the extremely pressing timetable, the entire field campaign was a tremendous success. Against all expectations, the team completed its arduous task on time, and on budget. So inter-cultural issues, even under very stressful circumstances, can be overcome successfully and culturally very diverse teams can accomplish miracles when working together. This was best testified in the joyful Camp Fire celebration that concluded the field campaign in Terai!"

In general, the intercultural conflicts happened in the LiDAR field campaign in Nepal. According to the study findings conflicts not only happened between the Nepalese team and international team or between the international team and local Terai people but also between the local Terai people and the project itself. This means that the local people were not only against the foreigners but also they were against with the project as a whole. According to the interviewee responses the local people did not allow some of their field crews (from any team) to measure the forests since they were angry with the Forest Department of Nepal. It shows that local people resisted also the project to be done in their areas.

4.2 Limitations of the study

As it has been explained in this study, the international team was composed by the experts of different companies and from different countries including Nepal. So, among the interviewees of the international team were Nepalese nationals. This situation created some sort of patriotism/bias of some of the Nepalese interviewees, instead of replying as international team members they responded

as the Nepalese during the interview. From this situation their responses may sound more like Nepalese rather than international. However, this happened to some of the interviewees and only at some of the interview questions.

Moreover, although the thesis concentrates on studying cultural differences of Finland and Nepal by reflecting the GLOBE cultural investigation, only Finnish culture was studied and analysed in the GLOBE investigation. However, according to the regional division of the GLOBE study, Nepal is placed among the Southern Asia countries. This may have some effects since not all Southern Asia countries practise exactly the same culture.

4.3 Recommendations

With the reference to the research findings, the following recommendations are highlighted:

It is crucial for the field campaigners to have cultural information of the counterparts. Providing cultural training or guides is important to international team concerning the culture of Nepal and its people i.e. local cultures. Also the Nepalese people, whom they work with the international experts, should know who will be working with them and what kind of culture they have. Once they become knowledgeable on cultures of one another, they will understand their differences, which will help them to find the ways on how to deal with one another. For instance, some societies like Finns have low context cultures, their people have direct verbal interaction and overt intention expression. Therefore, in a high context culture, people can see that low context people are aggressive and use force to ask for something. Therefore, being aware with counterpart's culture may avoid conflicts between them.

Communication is a crucial tool to avoid intercultural conflicts. Providing information not only between the teams or within the teams but also to the local people where the project will be conducted is important. Information should be disseminated earlier to the local people as a way of involving them, before starting the project to keep them ready. If the local people are informed earlier about the project and what the project teams will deal with in their forest regions, the

local people may appreciate and welcome the project as well as the field campaigners including foreigners. This is a question of power distance.

Involvement of team members in discussions and decision making of the project plan should be considered. The team leaders should involve as many subordinates as possible to contribute to the project, specifically in issues related to them such as assigning tasks. This provides a chance to them to decide on their matters and they feel themselves as a part of the project. In this way all members in the project may work cooperatively and in peaceful way. Again this is a question of power distance.

Because cultures are different, people also differ in terms of their relationships to the relatives. Some have close relationships with the family, and friends, not only in the social level but also in organizations. These relations have an effect in hiring or selecting personnel in the authority. However, using human resource management to choose personnel is recommended. This will provide equal chances to all people. At the same time appropriate personnel are hired through this method. Also human resource management avoids bias and conflicts in the organization and society at large. This is the in-group collectivism question.

Since every project has targets that need to be reached in a particular time, its strategies should be well managed in order to reach the predetermined goals. Therefore it is very wise for the project crews to schedule as well as possible to accomplish the planned roles. Implementation of those responsibilities in time is very important not only to reach the project targets but also to avoid risks, for example unplanned costs.

Lastly, respect becomes a core issue in avoiding intercultural conflicts whenever people of different cultures meet together. Respect of others' culture, races, religion, individual's status, knowledge and education, should be considered by both sides of the teams. Moreover respect of norms and beliefs of the local people of a particular area is crucial for bringing harmony in the working environment. It is worse to think others' cultures are worthless.

Interviewees' comments

The following are the interviewees' contributions that suggest the ways which might be helpful to avoid conflicts between the Nepalese team, international experts and local people during the next field campaigns:

"I realize that people are different in different world, for instance, their schooling, traditions, culture, ways of thinking depend upon many things. That is good and very good opportunity. So, you have to learn. If you are acting something in different way dealing with the different people, you have to understand the situation, evaluate the situation, and organize the situation in order for the people to achieve the goal. Goal is a goal, we have to achieve it, but in between we have to be very careful to handle the strategies. So, keep your mind open."

"You should respect the country's cultural system, for example, in Finland or in Nordic countries; kissing, hugging are very normal thing but in this case in Nepal or in this Terai area or any area, rather a sort of taboo. If you have girl friend or boy friend or the international girl friend or boy friend you should not show that. If you are working in this country you should respect their culture, we have that problem. ...we need to respect the local social system. And you need to follow not only to respect, otherwise you can't work. Probably the cultural issues are more important especially when you are in the field, because you can't collect data if the local people don't like you."

"If you involve them, they will cooperate but you need to involve them. Do not think that you are an international expert you know all of these technical things. Don't think that way, because everybody is expert in their own field. There are expert in technical things, social things, how to handle the situation, that is why combination of all of these, international, national, consultation, discussion, planning, are very important."

"I think we can learn more things when we are in the field. We can see real things from the local people. When we are working with the international people we can learn their culture more or less. When the people are going to work internationally, they have to understand the social economic part and culture of the host country and they can adapt themselves how to deal with it."

"If the international team go to work, they have to know the cultural, religious and social aspects on that particular area. It is very important! Some people, for example, Hindus don't kill cows here or eat beef. If foreigners are asking about the beef, people will hate them because people make cow as a god."

Figures

Figure 1. Map of Nepal, p. 6

Charts

Chart 1. Risk and uncertainties are well taken into consideration. p. 22

Chart 2. The company's decisions are made in group discussions. p. 23

Chart 3. In the company there is no sex segregation. p. 24

Chart 4. Rationality in behaviour is emphasized rather than humanity. p. 25

Chart 5. Planning for future is highly appreciated. p. 26

Chart 6. Arbonaut's management value what one does more than who one is.
p. 27

Chart 7. Employees are concerned about each other. p. 28

Chart 8. Information is widely shared in the company. p. 30

Chart 9. Arbonaut company considers institutions (Educational system, Church, Parliament). p. 31

Tables

Table 1. Summary of the nine GLOBE cultural dimensions, p. 12

Table 2. Cultural comparison between Finland and Nepal, p. 20

References

Arbonaut Ltd. 2009. Milestones.

http://www.arbonaut.com/index.php?top=29&option=com_content&view=article&id=51&Itemid=53&lang=en. Assessed on 20. 01 . 2013.

Ashkanasy, N., Gupta, V., Mayfield, M. & Roberts, E. 2004. Future Orientation. In House, R. J, Hanges P. J, Javidan, M, Dorfman, P. W & Gupta, V. (ed.) Culture, Leadership, and Organizations – The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, pp. 182 - 342.

Bartlett, C & Davidsson, A. 2003. Improve your Globe Competence. Finland: Fintra.

Carl, D., Gupta, V. & Javidan, M. 2004. Power Distance. In House, R. J, Hanges P. J, Javidan, M, Dorfman, P. W & Gupta, V.(ed.) Culture, Leadership, and Organizations – The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, pp. 513 – 563.

Emrich, C., Denmark, F & Hartog, D. 2004. Cross-Cultural Differences in Gender Egalitarianism. In House, R. J, Hanges P. J, Javidan, M, Dorfman, P. W & Gupta, V. (ed.) Culture, Leadership, and Organizations – The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, pp. 343 – 394.

Feller, T. (2009). Nepal: The Essential Guide to Customs and Culture. Malaysia: Kuperard.

Gelfand, M., Bhawuk, D., Nishii, L. & Bechtold, D. 2004. Individualism and Collectivism. In House, R. J, Hanges P. J, Javidan, M, Dorfman, P. W & Gupta, V. (ed.) Culture, Leadership, and Organizations – The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, pp. 437 – 512.

Gupta, V. & Hanges, P. 2004. Regional and Climate Clustering of Social Culture. In House, R. J, Hanges P. J, Javidan, M, Dorfman, P. W & Gupta, V. (ed.) Culture, Leadership, and Organizations – The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, pp. 178 – 218.

Hartog, D. 2004. Assertiveness. In House, R. J, Hanges P. J, Javidan, M, Dorfman, P. W & Gupta, V. (ed.) Culture, Leadership, and Organizations – The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, pp. 395 – 436.

Hofstede, G. 1984. Culture's consequences: International differences in work-related values. Beverly Hill, CA: Sage.

Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G., Minkov, M. 2010. Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind. USA: Mc Graw Hill.

House, R. & Javidan, M. 2004. Overview of Globe. In House, R. J, Hanges P. J, Javidan, M, Dorfman, P. W & Gupta, V. (ed.) Culture, Leadership, and Organizations – The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, pp. 9 – 28.

House, R. 2004. Introduction. In House, R. J, Hanges P. J, Javidan, M, Dorfman, P. W & Gupta, V. (ed.). Culture, Leadership, and Organizations – The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Pp. 1-2.

Jamil, I. & Dangal, R. 2009. The State of Bureaucratic Representativeness and Administrative Culture in Nepal. Contemporary South Asia. Vol. 17, No. 2, pp. 193-211.

Javidan, M. 2004. Performance Orientation. In House, R. J, Hanges P. J, Javidan, M, Dorfman, P. W & Gupta, V. (ed.) Culture, Leadership, and Organizations – The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, pp. 239 – 281.

Jolly, J. 2009. Growing Fragility of Nepal's Peace Process. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/8417031.stm. Assessed on 06.12. 2012.

Kabasakal, H. & Bodur, M 2004. Humane Orientation in Societies, Organizations, and Leader Attributes. In House, R. J, Hanges P. J, Javidan, M, Dorfman, P. W & Gupta, V. (ed.) Culture, Leadership, and Organizations – The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. pp. 565 – 601.

Kandel, P. 2013. Re: Map reference. (pkkandelnepal@gmail.com). 22. 01. 2013

Kauranne, T. 2013. Said's Thesis and Pem's Article. (Tuomo.Kauranne@arbonaut.com). 04. 02. 2013.

Kimmel, P. 2006. Culture and Conflict. In Deutsch, M., Coleman, P., Marcus, E. 2006. The Handbook of Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice. (2nd. ed.). USA: Jossey-Bass.

Lewis, R. 1996. When Culture Collide: Managing Successfully Across Cultures. London: Nicholas Brealey.

Lindell, M. & Sigfrids, C. 2007. Culture and Leadership in Finland. In Chhokar, J., Brodbeck, F., & House, R. Culture and Leadership Across the World: the GLOBE Book of In-Depth Studies of 25 Societies. New York: Taylor & Francis Group. p. 75-106.

Panday, P. & Williams, R. 2011. Interplay between Conflict, Poverty and Remittance: The case of Nepal. International business and economic research journal. Vol. 10, No. 2.

Singleton, R., Toombs, L., Taneja, S., Larkin, C., & Pryor, M. 2011. Workplace Conflict: A Strategic leadership Imperative. International Journal of Business and public Administration. Vol. 8, no. 1. pp. 149 – 163.

Thapa, K. 2010. Religion and Law in Nepal. <http://lawreview.byu.edu/archives/2010/3/12%20-%20Thapa.FIN.pdf>. (Accessed on 02/01/2012).

U.S Department of State. 2012. Background note: Nepal. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5283.htm>. Accessed on 02/09/2012.

Vaara, E., Sarala, R., Stahl, G. K. & Bjorikman, I. 2012. The impact of organizational and national culture Differences and social conflict and knowledge transfer in the international acquisition. <https://helda.helsinki.fi/bitstream/handle/10138/30154/JMS,%20Vaara,%20Sarala,%20Stahl%20%26%20Bj%C3%B6rkman%202012.pdf?sequence=1>. Accessed on 30.11.2010.

Wann, E. August 2007. Violence in the Terai Region and the Madhesi Movement: Prospects for Peace in Nepal. <http://www.usip.org/publications/violence-terai-region-and-madhesi-movement-prospects-peace-nepal>. Accessed on 09/01/2012.

World Factbook. 2012. South Asia: Nepal. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/np.html>. Accessed on 02/09/2012.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Questionnaire of Arbonaut's culture

This questionnaire is aimed to collect the Arbonaut Ltd's. cultural information which will be used in my Master thesis to analyse intercultural conflicts. Please, spare your valuable time to provide your views. All responses will be held with utmost confidentiality.

Date:		Nationality:	
Age:		Gender:	<input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F

Answer 1 for Disagree - 2 Slightly disagree – 3 Not applicable – 4 Slightly agree and 5 Agree.

- | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Arbonaut's management value what one does more than who one is
<i>Comments:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Planning for future is highly appreciated.
<i>Comments:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. In the company there is no sex segregation.
<i>Comments:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. The company's decisions are made in group discussions
<i>Comments:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. The Arbonaut Company takes institutions in to consideration.
(Example Educational system, Church, Parliament)
<i>Comments:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Rationality in behaviour is emphasized rather than humanity.
<i>Comments:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

7. Information is widely shared in the company.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Comments:

8. Employees are concerned about each other

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Comments:

9. Risks and uncertainties are well taken into consideration.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Comments:

10. Any other items you think important to describe the Arbonaut's company culture.

Appendix 2. Interview questions of intercultural conflicts

This interview collects some information from the international team/Nepalese team who participated in the LiDAR field campaign in Nepal. The objective is to gather the data which will enable to analyze the intercultural conflicting issues happened during the project. As you are one among the field campaigners you have been selected to provide your views. Please, provide your honest responses and all of your responses will be treated with high confidentiality.

Introduction questions

1. What is your nationality?
2. Which company have you been working?
3. What is your position?
4. What was your position in the LiDAR field campaign?

Theme: Intercultural communication

5. What kind of problems have you had in the LiDAR field campaign in Nepal? What happened?
6. Do you think the Terai local people appreciated for your forestry services?
7. How did the Terai local people welcome you as a forest service provider?
8. Do you think the local people were informed about the project before starting?
9. Have the project teams asked any help from the local leaders? If yes, how did they respond?
10. What was the relationship between the international team/Nepalese team and your team like?
 - (a) What about between your teams and the local people?
 - (b) What obstacles did you face from them (local people)?
11. Do you think both of your teams had good working ethics, for instance, respect to each other?
12. Have you encountered aggressive behaviour during the project time?
 - (a) When and where?
 - (b) What happened?
13. Did you get appropriate professional and cultural training for this project?
14. Do you think the organization of tasks was good in both sides of the teams?

15. Do you think the international team/Nepalese team was following timetable in their duties? If not, what was the problem?
16. Did the international team/Nepalese team was accomplishing their responsibilities as planned?
17. On your side (as a team), did you accomplish your responsibilities? If not, what were the obstacles?
18. On your team, how tasks were assigned (was it assigned by groups or by individuals)? Did you like the way the tasks were assigned to your team?
19. Was there a big difference between the group leaders and other members of the team?
20. Are there any women working in this project? How did people consider women as workers?
21. Did you experience any kind of discrimination, for instance, racial or religious discrimination? If yes, how did you respond to that matter?
22. Did you make friends during your stay from either team or local people? Did you have any problem in your relationships?
23. Does your company encourage employees to share information and tools? How was the information shared between your group and the counterpart?
24. How do you see the future of Nepalese forests?
25. What is your comment or advice about this intercultural conflicts faced your team?